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BHAGAVAD-GITA
AN EXPOSITION

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AN EXPOSITION

ON THE BASIS OF
PSYCHO-PHILOSOPHY & PSYCHO-ANALYSIS

BY

VASANT G. RELE, F.C.P.S., L.M. & S.

(Author of "The Mysterious Kundalini")

WITH FOREWORDS BY

N. D. MEHTA, B.A.
AND
C. V. VAIDYA, M.A., LL.B.

D. B. TARAPOREVALA SONS & CO.
KITĀB MAHĀL, BOMBAY
1928

Printed by V. P. Pendherkar, at the Tutorial Press,
211a, Girgaum Back Road, Bombay and published by
Vasant G. Rele, Parekh Street, Girgaum, Bombay

To My Parents

FOREWORD

By N. D. MEHTA, B. A., Deputy Municipal Commissioner, Bombay. Author of "Hindu Eugenics," "The Evolution of the Conception of Pranava or OM", "History of Hindu Philosophy (in Gujarati)," Etc.

The Bhagavad-Gîtā or "Song Celestial" is an inspired book, and occupies a unique position in the sacred literature of Hindus. Whatever may be the difference in theological opinions of various teachers of Hinduism—whether they may be Saivites or Vaishnavaits—all are agreed that the fundamental teaching of the Gîtā is *non-sectarian*. Its eclectic nature has raised the Gîtā to the status of the Holy Bible of Hindus of all creeds, and the Great Teacher Śri Krishna has been recognised to be the perfect incarnation of the Divine.

Numerous commentaries have been written in Sanskrit and Vernacular languages of India, and the book has now been translated in almost all the civilised languages of the world whereby it has passed into the general stock of the human knowledge. It is no longer a book of general interest to Hindus only, but to all the branches of the human race.

FOREWORD

An inspired book differs from a mere reasoned work inasmuch as the former has a *suggestive* value in its teaching while the latter has got only a literal value. The greater the suggestive power (Dhvani) of a poem, the higher is its æsthetic and philosophical value. The suggestive power of words of an inspired book leads to various processes of thought culminating in a definite teaching of the interpreter. It is not necessary that the teaching deduced should coincide with the literal sense of the book or the exact teaching of the author who is a mere medium of inspiration. This method of interpretation is technically called Bhāshya which conveys "new meanings, back into old texts according to one's own education and outlook." It explains the words and judgment of others as accurately and faithfully as possible and this remark applies to all commentaries, whether they may be in Sanskrit or in any other language. A real commentary or Bhāshya implies an amplification of a condensed utterance or expression which is rich in meaning and significance as the great Sanskrit poet, Māgha, says, in his famous Kāvya :—

Sankshiptasyāpyatosyai Vākyasyārtha gariyasah
*Suvistara tarā vācho bhāshya bhūtā bhavantu mé.**

---

* संक्षिप्तस्याप्यतोऽस्यै वाक्यस्यार्थगरीयसः ।
सुविस्तरतरावाच्यो भाष्यभूता भवन्तुमे ॥

FOREWORD

Dr. Rele's study of the Bhagvad-Gîtā from the standpoint of modern psycho-analysis coupled with the ancient Indian idealistic philosophy is a valuable contribution to the exegetical literature on the Gîtā. Dr. Rele propounds a consistent theory that in the Gîtā, we have a definite solution of a problem :–How a diseased mind suffering from a division of the sub-conscious and conscious phases of an ego, like Arjuna, can be restored to its normal health by an arch psycho-analyst like Śri Krishna. The physico-psychic analysis of human mind is based on the text of 13th, 14th, and 15th chapters of the Gîtā, where the true nature of mind (Kshetra), ego (Kshetrajña), and the Supreme Being (Purushottama) is unfolded. The author prepares the ground of interpretation of the Gîtā in the first two chapters of his essay wherein he describes the human mind in its two phases :—

(1) Psychical (Avyakta) and (2) Physical (Vyakta). These two phases constitute a biune called a living being or a finite embodied soul or ego. The physical aspect of the living body (Kshetra) is the mortal or Kshara Purusha whereas the psychic aspect of the living body is the relatively immortal or Akshara Purusha. The mental field which is not fully revealed to

the ego has two planes—sub-conscious and conscious, the former being considerably more extensive than the latter. The light of the ego permeating through these planes is turned into subjective consciousness and the objective consciousness. The subjective and objective consciousness is an organic whole and inter-dependant. But the sub-conscious subjective life of the ego has a direct contact with the Cosmic Nature or Mûla-Prakriti and its controlling Super-conscious light called the Absolute or Purushottama. The control of the finite ego over the two planes mentioned above indicates a normally healthy mental activity, while the disharmony between the two planes which removes the control of the finite ego leads to psychic derangement. This derangement is the result of abnormal suppression of the operations of one side of the conscious life which leads to breaches of contact between the sub-conscious and conscious regions of the human mind. Excessive suppression of mental activity on conventional or orthodox mode of living without a diversion of the said activity on a different psychic field leads to abnormal results. The typical mind of Arjuna at the commencement of the Bhārata war is a deranged mental phenomena which was brought to its normal health by the

psycho-synthetic process adopted by Śri Krishna.

The essay explains how this psycho-synthetic process of healing was adopted, and the key to the teaching is to be found in the mystic apparatus called Aśvattha tree allegorically described in the first four verses of chapter XV of the Gîtā. Dr. Rele thinks that this mystic tree is not an *outside* mundane existence, but an *inside* apparatus which we call the nervous system. The traditional interpretation of Aśvattha as an external worldly life (Saṁsâra) is, in my opinion, based on one-sided interpretation of the Vedic text on which this Smriti text is based. A reference to Mahābhārata-Aśvamedha Parva 47, 12-15 quoted by Śankarāchārya in extenso in his Gîtā Bhāsya on XV. i. clearly shows that the tree referred to is not the external dead world, but "the external Brahma tree existing in all living beings" (Ajivyah sarvabhūtānām brahma vrikshâh sanātanah). The mystic tree is, therefore, not an allegorical tree or a mere poetic fancy, but a real apparatus to be found in all living beings.

The literary associations of the Aśvattha can be traced in the pre-Buddhistic Indian literature. The conception of Aśvattha as an emblem of mundane existence is very old.

The primary sense of Aśvattha is the well-

known sacred fig-tree—Ficus religiosa. It is sacred both among Hindus and Buddhists. Hindu ladies regard the tree as sacred to Vishnu, Buddhists regard it as sacred Bodhi-Vriksha under which Lord Gautama attained the spiritual illuminations. Both Hindus and Buddhists revere it as an emblem of knowledge or illumination.

In the vedic literature which preceded Lord Buddha, the principle of life is described as if it were a growing tree. This vital tree has its permanent root in the Absolute (Brahma) from which individual beings "originate like offshoots of trees". It is a continuous rejuvenating spiritual tree which sometimes grows into offshoots and sometimes reappears in another form through seedlings. It is both Kānda-ruha, *i. e.* reappearing in a new form through shoots as also Dhānā-ruha, *i. e.*, germinating from its seedlings. The germinal element is either in the bud or in the seeds. Similarly, the Aupanishad Purusha or the Absolute Soul realised through the Upanishad is a perenially rejuvenating tree from which individual Purushas appear as mortal (Kshara) beings in the form of physically embodied souls, as also as immortal (Akshara) psychic souls. The physical soul (Kshara Purusha) and psychic soul

(Akshara Purusha) are inter-connected; and the psychic soul contains the germs or seedlings from which new mortal frames originate. The former aspect of embodied soul is called Bhūtātma (living body), while the latter is called Vidnyanātma (psyche). The cosmic soul or Brahma is that mysterious living root from which individual souls emanate and is put forward as a puzzle by Yādnyavalkya to his opponents in the final stage of his debate (Brihad-aranyaka Upanishad III. Verses 1-7, 28). The opponents could not explain the mystery, and Yādnayavalkya at the conclusion of the debate winds up his position as under :—

> This root of the living person (Purusha) is nothing but the Absolute (Brahman) which is both conscious (Vidnyānam) and blissful (Ānandam). It is the mortal goal of the giver (Rāterdatuh Parāyanam). It is also the object of realisation of the living perfect knower (Tishthamānasya tadvidah).

The fig tree which originally came out of this spiritual root (Bramhan) is the first born called Prathamaja or Brahma. He is the primeval progenitor (Prajāpati). He lives a long life, while the offshoots arising of him appear and disappear in various lives and births. He sees the comedies and tragedies of individual

living beings, and remains as a perfect spectator of the human race in its historical evolution.

This macrocosmic soul of Bramhā has a region of his own called Bramha-Loka, wherein there is a life giving tree called Aśvattha-Soma-Savanah, a fig tree yielding Soma juice for rejuvenation. (See Chhāndogya. VIII. 5-3, also Kaushitaki Upanishad, where it is called Tilyovrikshah—a tree spreading germs like fine seedlings of the sesamum plant).

These fine seedlings from which new trees *i.e.* living beings originate, are under the control of the Solar Deity which is an embodiment of the cosmic life. The sesamum seeds then came to be regarded as sacred to the Sun. Aśvattha later on became the epithet of the Sun. When the conceptions of the Sun and Vishnu were mixed up, Aśvattha became sacred to Vishnu although it was originally associated with the Sun-God.

The great macro-cosmic soul typified by Bramhā or Hiranyagarbha in the Solar orb, was represented symbolically by the Pipal tree which witnesses the ceremonial oblations to the manes. One of the three Shrādhhas performed at Gayā is under this Pipal tree. In the Rig Veda X. 11. 135 it is said that "under this blooming tree (Vrikshe supalāshe) the Lord of

Death drinks the juice of what is offered to the manes. Herein our Lord of Beings—the greatest grandfather (Pitā-purānam) watches our doings." Later on it is said :—

"This is the abode of Lord of Death. It is otherwise called the temple of Gods" (Devmānam).

The above summary of the vedic texts relating to Aśvattha clearly indicates that the conception of this tree has direct connection with a living organism of the Macro-cosmic Purusha or person. When the Upanishadic teaching emphasized the identity of the micro-cosmic soul with the macro-cosmic spirit the sense of Aśvattha was involved in mysticism. Dr. Réle's interpretation rescues the sense of Aśvattha from a *mystic* or allegorical tree to that of a *real* apparatus in the form of cerebro-spinal nervous system in the human body. Dr. Rele in chapter IV of his essay has described the various parts of this wonderful tree which coincides with the anatomical structures and physiological functions of this wonderful instrument of all human knowledge and activity. This Chapter with its accompanying descriptive diagram will alone suffice to put Dr. Rele's reputation on a high level of research scholarship irrespective of his

exegetical acumen in his new interpretation of the Gîtā.

Dr. Rele with his clear insight into the teachings of the Gîtā on the psycho-analytic basis gives a lucid and succint account of the various passages which unfold a true and original interpretation of some of the verses that had long remained unintelligible. He sometimes differs radically from the traditional interpretation of the staunch followers of scholiasts like Śri Śankarācharya and others, so that, it will not be a striking feature of his elaborate work that the same as a whole may not be acceptable to them. But it must be said to his credit that he has made a unique attempt to put our own Scriptural doctrines, shrouded until now in mystery, in line with scientific theories of the modern progressive civilisation.

Students of the Gîtā may or may not accept this new interpretation as the meaning of the original author, but they can easily accept that what the original author wanted to be achieved by re-educating Arjuna through this spiritual dialogue by an occult process which now fits in with the psycho-analytic method of healing, scientifically established by Freudian literature.

I feel sure that the book will be read extensively and convey to European writers the

right meaning of our holy scriptures that have a sound basis of physiological and psychical truths.

Santa-Cruz
28th. Oct. 27.

N. D. MEHTA

FOREWORD

By C. V. VAIDYA, M.A., LL.B. Author of "History of Medieval India" "Mahābhārata, a Criticism," "Epic India," "Riddle of Ramāyana," "Karma-yogi-Gītā" (in Marathi), Etc.

I have gone through Dr. Rele's exposition of the Bhagavad-Gîtā from the Dhyāna-yoga point of view, with intense attention and admiration. The Bhagavad-Gîtā is a wonderful work, treating of the most abstruse problem of philosophy in simple yet pleasing language. But the meaning is deep; and philosophical thinkers of India have from time to time written thoughtful exegetical treatises explaining its teachings from their points of view. The oldest is that of Śankarāchārya who looks at the Gîtā as expounder of Sannyāsa Yoga. Ramānuja, Madhva, Vallabha and Dnyāneshwar looked at the Gîtā as the expounder of Bhakti, Dāsya, Pushti, and Dhyāna cum Yoga cum Bhakti Mārgas. The latest exposition is that by the late Lokamanya Tilak who looks at the Gîtā as expounding Karma-yoga or the path of unselfish action. It seemed as if the different aspects from which the

Gîtā could be viewed were exhausted. But Dr. Rele's exposition brings before us yet another aspect from which the Bhagavad-Gîtā teachings can be viewed—an aspect based on the Yoga-philosophy of the Hindus combined with the modern psychological science of the West. Nay, it takes its support from anatomy of the human body and is thus grounded on the firm basis of the medical science of the West, which he explains well in his work " The Mysterious Kundalini ".

The Aśvattha tree spoken of at the beginning of the 15th chapter of the Gîtā is not a mythical or allegorical one but is, Dr. Rele explains, the actual nerve tree in the human body with its roots in the brain. That the sub-conscious in man is a part of the Super-conscious and can and does communicate with it at times is again the experience of many persons and the Bhagavad-Gîtā, simple as it seems, shows, according to Dr. Rele's very thoughtful exposition, how the sub-conscious in man eventually merges into the all-pervading Super-conscious. The last or 18th Chapter as expounded by Dr. Rele is indeed the climax of his work as it is of the Bhagavad-Gîtā.

The further merit of Dr. Rele's exposition is that it explains certain difficult ślokas in the Bhagavad-Gîtā very aptly and even ingeniously.

The meaning assigned to Saptarshis, to Pûrve-Chatvārah, to Manu, to Vaiśyas and Rājarshis, to Yama, Agni, Varuna and Śaśanka, to Tapa Yajna and Dāna, etc. in this Psychic interpretation of the Gîtā is not only very ingenious but is based on Upanishads and other ancient authorities. It would be necessary for Dr. Rele to translate the whole Bhagavad-Gîtā in this new light and when this has been done, his work, *viz.* this thesis and the translation would stand, I am sure, on a par with the Bhāshyas of Śankara, of Ramānuja, of Madhva and of Tilak. The Bhagavad-Gîtā finally may have an esoteric meaning and this new interpretation is worthy of careful consideration, for the gods are fond of the mystical (Paroksha-priyā-iva-hi-devāh*) as the Chhāndogya Upanishada says. An inspired work besides its apparent meaning has also an esoteric meaning behind it and the thoughtful public will hail this work of Dr. Rele with intense delight and satisfaction.

C. V. VAIDYA

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*परोक्ष प्रिया इव हि देवाः

PREFACE

This exposition of the Bhagavad-Gîtā is the outcome of a comparative study of Eastern (Hindu) and Western Psychology. After studying books on Western Psychology and Psychoanalysis, I tried to find in our ancient Sanskrit literature, a book that could be compared with the modern researches into the working of the mind. Some of the Vedas and most of the Upanishads are, in my opinion, psychological treatises, but their true meaning is so overlaid with philosophical discussions, symbolical expressions and ritualistic details that it is not easily discoverable. This and other difficulties prevent them from being made available to the ordinary student, and consequently we are unable to use them as their originators intended, as manuals of mind-training, pointing out the defects in the working of our consciousness, and the way in which they should be remedied.

What I was looking for was a book that not only taught the theory and practice of psychology, but also indicated the methods of analysing, synthesising and re-educating the different phases of the mind of an individual on the border-line

of mental derangement. Such a book I found in the Bhagavad-Gîtā, "The Song Celestial" which forms part of the Mahābhārata, one of the greatest Epic poems of India. It teaches the repair of the disordered mind by bringing to light the causes of the disturbance, so making possible the restoration of that harmony which ought to exist between the different parts. Thus its object is the same as that of the modern science of Psycho-analysis.

But though the object of the Gîtā and of European books on Psycho-analysis is similar, the fundamental principle is different. Sigmund Freud of Vienna, the pioneer of present-day Psycho-analysis, bases his treatment of the disordered mind on the theory that sexual desire in some form or other is the fundamental desire underlying all other desires and emotions, and that all mental disorders can be traced to that source. The defect in this conception of Psycho-analysis is that the individual is made to revolve round his emotions, his mind is not taken away from the object of desire. In the Hindu method on the other hand, the mind is directed to the divine qualities of the Psyche. The break in the harmonious working of the mind is shown to be due to the constant suppression of impulses coming from without, impulses alien to its divine

nature ; the dislocated phases of the mind are re-collected, re-organised, and the unified mind is then directed to the realisation of the divine qualities of the sub-conscious. It is Psycho-synthesis rather than Psycho-analysis.

The exposition of the teachings of the Gîtā in the following pages may perhaps also help to solve the much debated questions : as to whether the Gîtā is an interpolation in the Mahābhārata, whether it is composed by the same author as the Mahābhārata, and whether the original Gîtā was much shorter than the present version.

Considering the mental condition of Arjuna as depicted in the Gîtā, my opinion is that the Gîtā was preached for his special benefit, and at the most appropriate time ; also that it must have been preached by one who was thoroughly acquainted with all the circumstances that had been preying on his mind before the battle. In no other way could a single discourse have been made so effective.

To understand the importance and effectiveness of the Gîtā, one must be acquainted with the events narrated in the earlier chapters of the Mahābhārata, and then one can see that the teachings of the Gîtā are a natural sequence of those events. It is quite possible that some verses have been interpolated at different times

by various critics to suit their particular points of view, but the number of such verses, in my opinion, is not very large—certainly I cannot agree with the extreme view of the German critic Garbe that the interpolated verses are as many as 178. According to some scholars, the original Gîtā consisted of fifty-eight verses distributed in different parts of the song, while others are of opinion that only verses 11 to 35 of the second chapter of the Sacred Book formed the original Gîtā. It would however have been quite impossible to establish a working harmony in the mind of a man determined to inaction with such a small number of verses, and the necessary number is increased by the constant questions which he asks and insists on having answered, such questions being both symptoms of his condition and attempts to resist the treatment. I am inclined to believe therefore, that the Gîtā as we have it, with the possible exception of a few verses, is the original Gîtā, and that it was composed by the author of the Mahābhārata.

The interpretation of the teachings of the Gîtā as given in this volume may also be helpful in explaining some verses which have hitherto been unintelligible. The reader must judge of this for himself.

I have sometimes changed the *order* of the chapters of the Gîtā to suit my interpretation, but the *translation* is as nearly literal as possible.

Before I conclude, I have to thank my friend Mr. S. S. Mehta, B. A. for going through the manuscripts and making various useful suggestions.

V. G. RELE

Girgaum, Bombay
1st March, 1928

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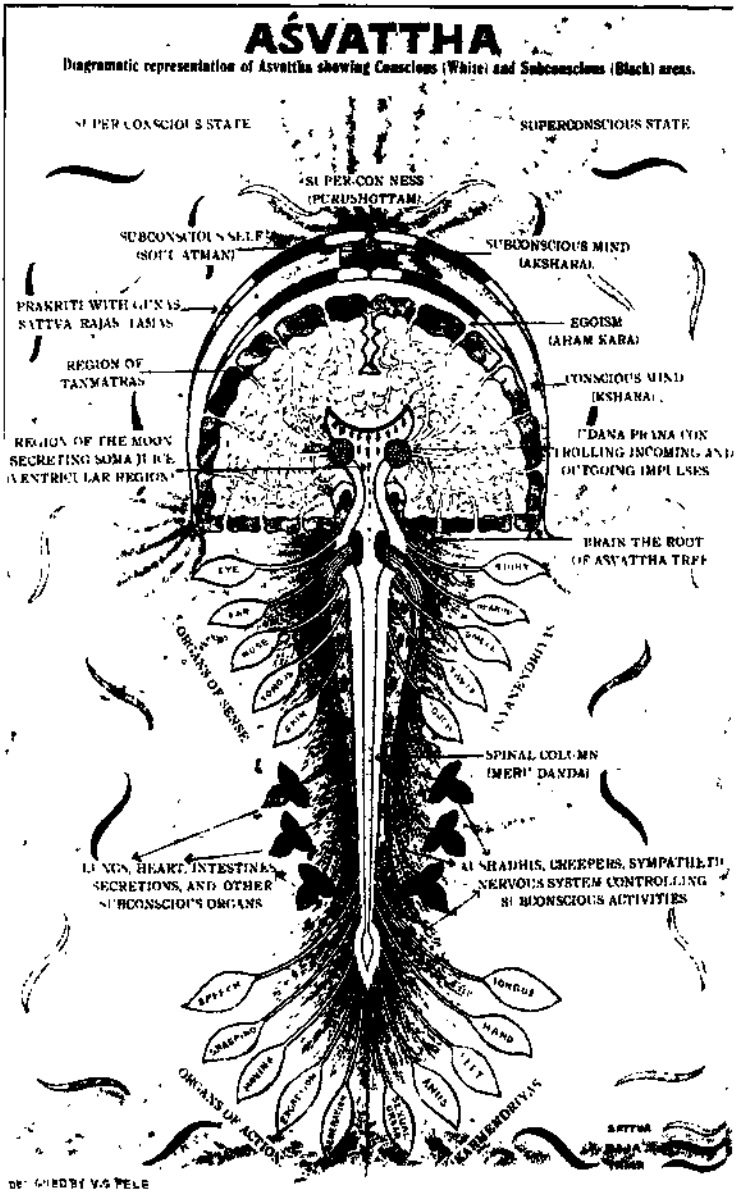

ASVATTHA
Diagramatic representation of Asvattha showing Conscious (White) and Subconscious (Black) areas.
SUPERCONSCIOUS STATE
SUPERCONSCIOUS STATE
SUPER-CONSCIOUSNESS (PURUSHOTTAM)
SUBCONSCIOUS SELF (SOFT ATMAN)
SUBCONSCIOUS MIND (AKSHARA)
PRAKRITI WITH GUNAS SATTVA RAJAS TAMAS
EGOISM (AHAM KARA)
REGION OF TANMATRAS
CONSCIOUS MIND (KSHARA)
REGION OF THE MOON SECRETING SOMA JUICE (VENTRICULAR REGION)
UDANA PRANA CONTROLLING INCOMING AND OUTGOING IMPULSES
BRAIN THE ROOT OF ASVATTHA TREE
EYE
SIGHT
EAR
HEARING
NOSE
SMELL
TONGUE
TASTE
SKIN
TOUCH
ORGANS OF SENSE
KARMENDRIYAS
SPINAL COLUMN (MERU DANDA)
LUNGS, HEART, INTESTINES, SECRETIONS, AND OTHER SUBCONSCIOUS ORGANS
NADIS (NADHIS, CREEPERS, SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM CONTROLLING SUBCONSCIOUS ACTIVITIES
SPEECH
TONGUE
GRASPING
HAND
WALKING
FEET
EXCRETION
ANUS
GENERATION
SEXUAL ORGANS
ORGANS OF ACTION
KARMENDRIYAS
SATTVA
RAJAS
DESIGNED BY V.G. PELE

अश्वत्थः

ऊर्ध्वमूलमधः शाखमश्वत्थं प्राहुरव्ययम् ।
छन्दांसि यस्य पर्णानि यस्तं वेद स वेदवित् ॥
ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ।
मनःषष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति ॥

× × × ×
× × × ×

अश्वत्थमेनं सुविरूढमूल ।
मसङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्वा ॥
ततः पदं तत्परिमार्गितव्यम् ।
यस्मिन्गता न निवर्तन्ति भूयः ॥

× × × ×
× × × ×

Gītā Chap. XV.

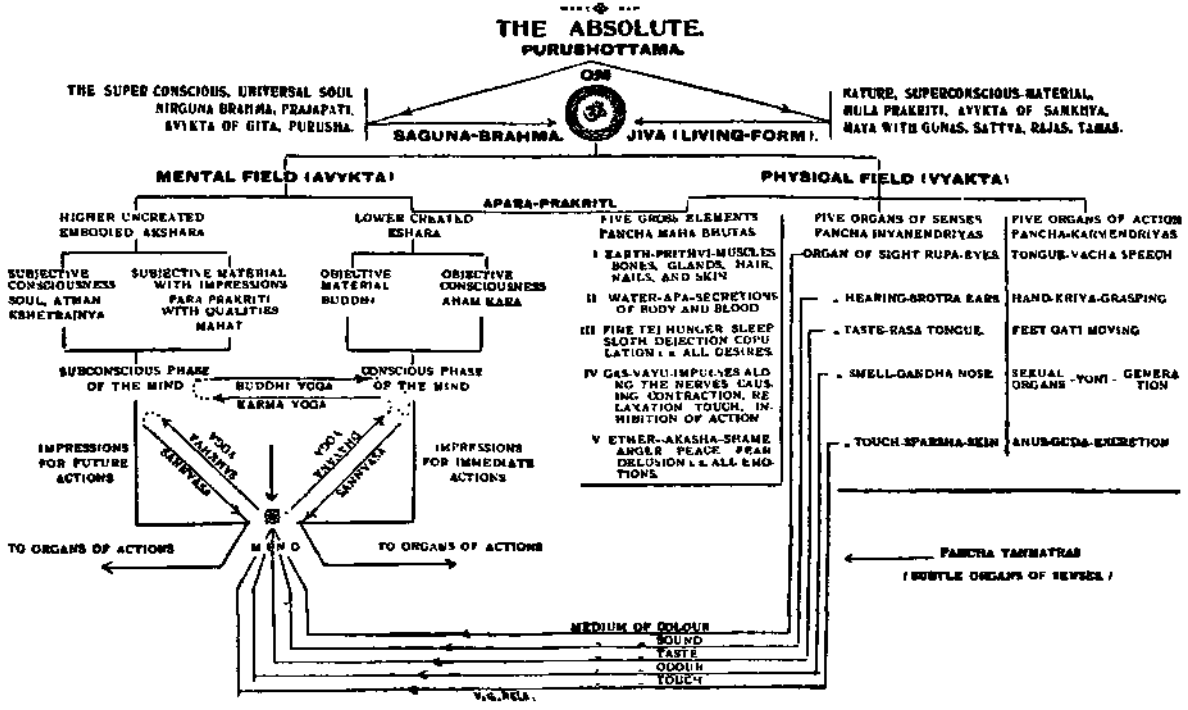
AŚVATTHA

This Aśvattha, with its roots above and branches below is known to be the part of the organised physical body ; desires are its leaves. He who knows it (its working) knows the knowable. This Aśvattha has ever been the physical manifestation of the Absolute in this world of life. It attracts towards it the senses and the mind rooted in the nature around.

× × × × ×

Having lopped off this firmly rooted Aśvattha by weapon of non-attachment that stage should be sought, attaining which there is no return (to this mortal existence) any more.

A chart showing the composition of the living body, its working and its relation with the Divine, as depicted in the Bhagawad-gita.



THE BHAGAVAD-GÎTĀ

An exposition on the basis of Psycho-philosophy and Psycho-analysis.

INTRODUCTION

So many and varied are the existing introductions to, interpretations of, and discourses on the Bhagavad-Gîtā, that to write anything more on the subject may seem superfluous. One of the great charms of the book, however, is that the more it is read, the more various appear the possible interpretations of its teachings. The mirror of the Gîtā is so clear and untarnished that it reflects ideas from every point of view. The materialist finds the book a perfectly practical manual of daily life and conduct, the philosopher finds it an equally clear guide to the knowledge of the Self, the man of affairs says that the sole aim of the Gîtā is to guide him on the path of action, while the devotional man finds that it leads him along the path of adoration till he merges himself into the Supreme.

Such universality of appeal in the teachings of a single book is unusual and leads us to ask :

Had the Author all these interpretations in mind when he composed its teachings, or had he, perhaps, an interpretation of his own that included and transcended all?

However we may answer this question, the fact remains that the Gîtā is worthy of concentrated study from all view points, no matter how diverse.

The insight of the Author of the Gîtā into the functionings of the human mind is so just, so profound and so true to human experience, that his teachings bring all the various interpretations to one conclusion–that the goal to be reached by all is the merging of the individual self into THAT from which it emanated.

Many writers, instead of receiving into their minds the real objective teachings of the Gîtā with its proper moral and human surroundings, merely read their own subjective ideas into it and consequently find there just what they expect, thus giving room to a good deal of irrelevant criticism.

It must be admitted of course, that the teachings of the Gîtā had a previous existence in the Śruti. The Gîtā teaches nothing new. The so-called Dvaita philosophy of the Sāṁkhya and the Advaita philosophy of the Vedānta were preached long before the Gîtā was written.

Where then lies the special importance attached to the Gîtā? It lies in the fact that in the Gîtā all the teachings of all the then extant philosophies are synthesised to rouse one single individual from his lethargy, to remove his doubts and fears and to restore his confidence. As distinguished from the teachings of the Upanishads, which are purely theoretical, these teachings of the Gîtā are entirely practical, they are applied philosophy, they are applicable to our everyday existence, they guide the bewildered, quiet his agitated mind and enable him to take a saner and more reasonable view of the difficulties in the midst of which he is placed.

And this superiority of the Gîtā and of its Author is due, not to the fact that its theistic teachings are more helpful than others, nor to the particular value of the exposition of Yoga philosophy contained therein. Such teachings are always of value to those who are above the average in their moral and spiritual outlook, but to the ordinary man, they are of no value until he has been led to the control of the mind by the process of analysis and reasoning, and has thereby established an harmonious connection between the conscious and the unconscious. It is in this process of reasoning and analysis that the importance of the Gîtā mainly lies.

Before proceeding to explain this view of mine with regard to the teachings of the Gîtā, two points must be explained. First—Why should this mood of dejection (Vishāda) have attacked Arjuna alone, and that, too, on the very field of battle, and not also his brothers, including the pious Yudhishthira, who were like himself about to kill their kinsmen in order to regain their worldly possessions? From what we have read about the early life and great morality of Yudhishthira, this Ajātshatru (one who has no enemies), the embodiment of humility and compassion, ought to have been full of dejection and despair on the battle-field. From the previous chapters of the Mahābhārata we learn that he had been so dejected, but that a word of cheer from his younger brother Arjuna, before he fell under the cloud of dejection himself, was sufficient to dispel the cloud.

The second point is—Was there anything peculiar about the condition of Arjuna when he suddenly became unnerved and depressed, that made Śri Krishna think it worth while to discourse thus with him with a view to his relief? This question is answered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER I

Causes, predisposing and immediate, for the dejection of Arjuna on the battle-field (Vishāda-yoga)

GĪTĀ CHAPTER I

An answer to all the questions in the previous chapter can be found in the earlier chapters of the Mahābhārata. King Pāndu, having accidentally killed a Brahmin, renounced his kingdom and retired to the forest to finish his life in penance. He left his kingdom in charge of his brother Dhritarāshtra until his sons should be old enough to undertake the responsibility. But Dhritarāshtra kept the kingdom for himself and his sons, refusing to his nephews any share in their inheritance. From early childhood, therefore, there had been enmity between the two groups of cousins, the Pāndavas (sons of Pāndu) and the Dhārtarāshtras (sons of Dhritarāshtra). Duryodhana, one of the latter group, was envious of the growing popularity, and also of the moral and spiritual superiority of the

Pāndavas, and tried to get rid of them by foul means. He tried to poison the mighty Bhima, and having failed in this attempt, he tried to kill them all by inviting them to a beautiful house built of shellac, and setting fire to it while they were inside. The Pāndavas knew that the wicked and spiteful Duryodhana and his brothers were at the back of these and many other calamities that befell them, but they kept their own counsel, expressed no indignation, and made no attempts at retaliation. Duryodhana, having failed in several attempts on their lives, asked permission of his blind father, Dhritarāshtra, to challenge Yudhishthira to a game of dice. Yudhishthira, by the rules of his caste, could not refuse such a challenge, and he accepted it willingly, hoping to win back for himself and his brothers the kingdom which Dhritarāshtra and his sons had usurped.

Śakuni, a clever gambler, played with Yudhishthira on behalf of his benefactor, Duryodhana, and won from him all his possessions. When Yudhishthira had nothing left to stake, the artful Śakuni suggested that in the hope of regaining what he had lost he should wager the lives of himself and his brothers. Yudhishthira yielded to the suggestion and lost again. As a last chance he staked

Draupadi, the wife of the five brothers, and that final stake was lost also.

One can imagine the feelings of those who were watching the play, and especially of the Pāndavas, who were enraged at their eldest brother's sacrifice of their lives and liberties without their consent. But as was their custom, they repressed their feelings, out of respect for their brother, who was also their king. But the repression did not last long. Draupadi was sent for by Duryodhana to take her place in the palace as his slave, and when she refused to go, Dushāsana, a younger brother of Duryodhana, who had been sent to fetch her, dragged her by the hair to the assembly and began to pull off her dress, abusing her harshly all the time. Bhima, seeing her treated in this way, was grieved beyond endurance, and turning to Yudhishthira, he gave vent to his anger in a storm of words, and even attempted to burn off his brother's hands; Arjuna too was greatly enraged by his brother's act, but he did not allow himself to be betrayed into hasty action, and he even persuaded Bhima to restrain himself.

Draupadi, with great cleverness, raised several legal points for the consideration of King Dhritarāshtra and the assembly. She asked whether Yudhishthira had offered the stakes willingly, or

whether they had been forced upon him by his opponent, whether the king was in full possession of his senses when the stakes were suggested, and lastly, whether she could legally be made a slave when the stake was made by one who had already enslaved himself, and therefore had ceased to be her husband. The decision was in her favour on all points, and so she secured, not only her own freedom, but that of the Pāndavas and the restoration of their possessions.

Duryodhana, seeing that his plan of securing the wealth of the Pāndavas for himself had been frustrated by the decision of his father, began to poison his father's mind against his cousins with stories of their behaviour towards him. At last he persuaded his father to allow him to challenge Yudhishthira once more, the stakes being declared beforehand. They were, that the vanquished party should go, taking with them only their necessary garments, and live for twelve years in a forest, their place of abode being known to all, and that a thirteenth year should be spent by them in disguise in some inhabited country without being recognised, the penalty of recognition being that the whole period of thirteen years should be repeated.

Dhritarāshtra yielded to his son's persuasion and the Ajātśatru was again challenged. Ac-

cording to the Kshattriya custom he was bound to accept the challenge—he played the game and lost. The stake had, of course, been devised with the special intention of humiliating the Pāndavas, but though they were powerful enough to fight with their cousins, they refused to break the sanctions of moral and religious custom, and left the kingdom for the forest. But though they appeared unmoved, the continued oppression and insult could not but make a deep impression on their minds.

Powerful and skilled in the arts of war as they were, if they had given vent to their feelings of anger and hatred they could easily have overcome the Dhārtarāshtras. Their cause was righteous, they would only have been taking back the inheritance their cousins had usurped, no-one would have blamed them if they had done so. But having a high moral and religious standard, they repressed their natural feelings, humbled themselves before their enemies, and allowed them to have their way. This involved a tremendous amount of self-control and a consequent great accumulation of energy from the suppressed feelings, in all of them, but especially in Arjuna. He was a very skilful bowman, and was also deeply learned in the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Smritis, and in

him the sense of morality and righteousness was more deeply implanted than in any of his brothers except Yudhishthira. We have the authority of his brother Bhima, who relieved his own pent up energy of repression by scolding his eldest brother, for saying that Arjuna never sought relief in that way:—"This son of Prithā, Vivatsu (Arjuna), is the best of all bowmen. He is certainly much aggrieved, yet he lives quietly like a lion in his den. He who is able to kill all the bowmen in the world without assistance, suppresses his wrath in his breast like a great elephant. (Vana-parva : Chap. XXXV.)

In a previous life, Arjuna had been Nara, a great sage, in the life described in the Mahābhārata he is represented as having passed through the stages of purely material existence and as moving slowly towards the spiritual. His temperament was therefore quite unlike that of Bhima, the man of action. Bhima's repression of feeling was of very short duration. He turned his repressed energy into other channels, and used it either in retaliation or in scolding Yudhishthira for having landed them in such a predicament, and consequently his mental balance was undisturbed. Draupadi, like Bhima, released her energy in bewailing her condition, and in blaming Yudhishthira for his indiscriminate

action. The moral, pious and virtuous Dharma (Yudhishthira), knowing that the law of Karma was eternally in force, and that he had acted entirely in accordance with Kshattriya usage, never showed the slightest resentment towards his cousins and bore manfully all the taunts of Bhima and Draupadi. He knew that virtue would conquer in the end and was patient. The twins, Nakula and Sahadeva, though brave and religious, were entirely under the control of their elder brother, and so seemed indifferent to their circumstances. They had no opinion of their own and never allowed themselves to be distressed by the results of the action of their eldest brother.

These five brothers may be considered as representing humanity in different stages of evolution. The pious and virtuous Dharma was living his real life in the spiritual world, and had taken a human form in order to help those to whom objective existence was still necessary. Arjuna was still capable of being impressed by external circumstances, but controlled these impressions according to the dictates of his conscience. The sense impressions were striving for manifestation but the life from within was urging him to repress them. This conflict between the internal and the external put him in the position of the "Dweller on the Threshold"

in Lytton's novel "Zanoni".

Bhima allowed himself to be swayed almost entirely by external impressions and acted in accordance with them. He seldom allowed his "great within" to influence his actions.

The twins, Nakula and Sahadeva, received impressions from without, but translated them into activity in accordance with the wise advice of their eldest brother. They were not yet sufficiently developed to translate into action on their own account the impressions they received.

It can easily be seen, therefore, that the mental conflict was strongest in Arjuna. Started by hatred of his cousins, because of their wickedness, it was increased during the exile by anxiety and fear lest they should be discovered by their enemies before the completion of the thirteenth year (Ajnyāta-vāsa). The fear and anxiety were well founded, the Pāndavas were well known to everyone in all ranks of life, and it was very difficult for them to conceal their identity, and if discovered, the penalty, according to the terms of the wager, was a repetition of the term of exile in the forest (Vanavāsa) and of hiding (Ajnyātavasa) with its accompanying trials and humiliations. They might even have to repeat the cycle again and again, and then their vows of vengeance on Duryodhana and his companions would never

be fulfilled and their kingdom would never be regained.

Such a combination of causes, subjective and objective could not but reduce one who was on the threshold of the spiritual life to a most abject condition of mentality, far more acute than could be produced by any mere physical terror. The constant repression of the emotions of anger, hatred and hostility from his early childhood had produced in Arjuna an accumulation of latent energy, and this needed to be directed to channels other than the natural ones, if the unconscious was not to be unduly impressed by it. We are constantly repressing certain emotions, and the repression is necessary for our normal existence ; but at the same time we are directing the energy generated by these repressions into other channels, either intellectual or physical, associated with a certain amount of pleasure or excitement and so we are none the worse for it.

Arjuna, in his strenuous endeavour to learn the art of a bowman from his great teachers Indra and Mahādeva, had forgotten these emotions entirely and the energy generated by their repression had gathered tremendous force, because, as it was never in his consciousness, he could not direct it to a suitable outlet. He was

perfectly normal during this period of repression with regard to his other ideas and thoughts, but the pent-up energy was still there when at last, the period of exile safely over, he went to the battle-field, enthusiastic, full of the hope of victory and of regaining his kingdom, on finding himself face to face with his enemies the whole force of the repressed hatred and anger was released. He could not adequately direct this liberated energy into action, because his conscience intervened, putting before him the fear of committing sin by killing his cousins and other kinsmen. Thus the repressed energy, on its way to manifestation in a conscious act, was checked half-way, and ultimately assumed a form in emotions which were the exact opposite of its original cause. This was a waste of psychic energy and was harmful to him.

Such a halfway discharge of pent-up energy produces that physical and mental disability which goes by the name of psycho-neurosis or functional disease of the mind.

Arjuna's accumulated repulsion towards the Dhārtarāshtrās was unconsciously replaced by mental emotions of fear and grief, and also by physical inaction, accompanied by the symptoms of inability to collect his thougts, difficulty in pulling himself together, and a sense of confusion

and embarrassment. Other purely physical symptoms were tremors, sweating, nausea, cardiac pain and palpitation. His mental mechanism was disturbed, but not destroyed, by the sudden discharge of pent-up energy, it refused to answer to his consciousness, and he became unable to fight.

Arjuna's inability to fight cannot be ascribed to any fault or blamable weakness in himself or indeed to any subjective cause. If it had been so, he would not have been able to rout the same army as then confronted him, when, on another occasion, with a totally different motive, he rescued the cattle of Virāt from the hands of Duryodhana and his party. In that case the weakness and timidity of Prince Uttara, who boasted too much, and got nervous when he saw the mighty army of the Kauravas, stirred Arjuna to greater activity even than usual. Arjuna's weakness proceeded quite rightly and legitimately from valid and sufficient objective causes.

The teachings of the Gîtā were therefore preached to an individual, who, on the field of battle, was suffering from a disease of his mental mechanism. The interpretation of its teaching, based on that supposition, will necessarily be somewhat different from those that have been published before. We shall see later on, by

what process of analysis, synthesis and re-education Bhagavān (Lord) Śri Krishna re-established the broken connection between the conscious and the unconscious, so that his disciple could say "I have regained my memory through Thy grace, Oh immutable One! my doubts are all dissolved away, I will act according to Thy word. (Chap. XVIII. 72.)

A very good parallel to the case of Arjuna can be found in what is a common occurrence in every day life—a student of average intelligence, with inadequate means of subsistence, going up for a university examination. He is fully aware that his future prosperity depends on the result of the examination and consequently feelings of doubt and anxiety have been making impressions on his mind though the feelings have been repressed during the progress of his studies. The energy accumulated by this repression lies dormant in him till it is released by the approach of the day of the examination. This liberated energy, if not utilised by the conscious mind and directed along its proper channels, displaces his feelings of anxiety by the emotion of fear, with associated physical symptoms, and sometimes so unnerves him that he refuses to appear for the examination. It is not fear of the examiners or of the examination hall, if there were nothing depending

on the results of the examination he would be able to satisfy the examiner in all the questions he might be asked in the very hall which he now refuses to enter. It is not subjective causes that are at work to make him nervous. Objective causes, his surroundings of misery, poverty and anxiety, have formed a web round the unconscious, and when the force of circumstances causes the unconscious to break through that web and endeavour to reach the conscious, the force is spent half-way and is manifested in the form of fear. A word of cheer, good advice and sound reasoning will probably help him to restore his mental harmony, and he will appear for the examination and probably succeed. A student above the average, or one who is in good circumstances will not be affected in this way, neither will one who is below the average.

I should therefore place the behaviour of such a student in the same category as that of Arjuna. The immediate cause at work in both cases is fear with its associated physical symptoms. The predisposing causes vary according to their social status and surroundings with anxiety as their basis. Both are suffering from Psycho-neurosis, a functional disease of the mind.

CHAPTER II

Mind—its aspects and their working.
(*Kshetra-kshetrajnya-vibhāga-yoga, Guna-traya-vibhāga-yoga*).

GÎTĀ CHAPTERS XIII & XIV

In order to understand what is meant by mental disease, we must first define the term "Mind". The dictionary definition does not help us. According to Aristotle, mind is the sum total of the functioning of the organism when in a living condition. Mental illness, then, would be the disorder of any of the functions of the whole body, whether of memory, perception, emotion, desire or action. If anything goes wrong with the actions of the body, either the abstract ones, such as thinking or remembering, or the manifest ones, such as speaking or walking, it becomes difficult for the person so affected to make normal adjustments to his social and other surroundings and also to his own interior conditions.

A perfect definition of mind is impossible. The Author of the Gîtā, in describing the composition of the body, calls it "Ekam"

(the one). According to him the body is composed of "the great elements, the Ego (Ahamkāra), the conscious (Buddhi), the unconscious (Avyakta), the ten senses, the one (mind), the five objects of the senses, desire, aversion, pleasure, pain, the body, intelligence and fortitude. These, briefly described, constitute the field (Kshetra) and its modifications". (XIII. 6, 7).

From this description it is evident that the body is composed of mental and physical fields. The mental field consists of the Ego, and the objective and subjective aspects of mind, while the physical field consists of : the five organs of sense—skin, eyes, ears, nose and tongue, which give us respectively the knowledge of touch, sight, hearing, smell and taste; the five organs of action—tongue, hands, feet, sexual organs and anus, with their respective functions of speech, grasping, movement, generation and excretion and the five finer feelings or perceptions which go by the name of Tanmātras. The Tanmātras have a reference to both the subjective and the objective aspects of the mind, but the organs of action with reference to the subjective aspect of the mind are all sub-conscious activities which carry on the functions of retentiveness, absorption,

circulation, secretion and ejection. Everything contained in the physical field exists only by virtue of the ONE, the mind, which is active while the body lives. To know the various functions of the mind there must be a knower, who is conscious of all the visible and invisible activities of the mind. He must have the attribute of awareness, without which the activities of the mind cannot be known or felt. Who is it in us that is conscious of the activities of the mental field? If that consciousness is located in the brain, it must occupy space, like all material things. Modern physiologists suppose that consciousness is a physico-chemical substance lying dormant in the cortex of the brain until it is stimulated into activity by coming in contact with the great Cosmic Energy, but it is impossible for them to verify the statement while the body is alive, and when the body is dead the substance is not found. Most books on psychology however, ignore altogether the one who is aware of the activities of the mind, and deal only with thoughts, emotions and acts of the will, that is with its visible manifestations.

Some psychologists (mostly Eastern) on the other hand, state that the knower is the Ego, residing in the human body which it leaves at

death, and not demonstrable to science. This is the fundamental difference between the metaphysical psychology of the Scriptures, and the present-day psychology of the West.

This Ego (Kshetrajña) or Soul sees, watches and feels the various activities of the subjective mind and its attributes (Avyakta) and also of the objective mind (Buddhi) and its attributes (Ahamkāra), which are collectively called the "mind." In the metaphysical teachings of the Gîtā, this condition of "awareness" of the various activities of the mind in the physical field is shown to have three aspects—objective, subjective and super-subjective or absolute. The Ego with its super-subjective or absolute aspect discerns its relationship with the universe; this relationship of the universe with the absolute is the object to be known (Jneyam), and this knowledge is immortality, for the Absolute is the supreme Brahma, having no beginning, who is neither being nor non-being (XIII. 3). In its subjective aspect the Ego knows what is taking place within himself, that is, in the vast field of individuality. This knowledge is called Wisdom (Adhyātma-Jnyāna). In its objective aspect the Ego knows what is taking place in its immediate external world and gets the Adhi-bhautic knowledge. It is this aspect of the Ego that

knows facts, and reasons in the immediate present, and governs all the voluntary actions of the body.

The Ego in its absolute aspect works in the field of the superconscious; in its subjective aspect, in that of the sub-conscious; while in its objective aspect it occupies the field of the conscious (Ahamkāra) and becomes the living soul in the world of life. In this aspect he uses as his agent for gaining knowledge, the mind together with the five subtle organs of sense which abide in Nature (Prakriti), the original source of the material world, possessing the essential qualities of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas (XV. 7).

It is the subjective aspect of the Ego that rules over the real interior action, that is, all the involuntary actions of the mind. It is the cause of change and growth. Unless change takes place in the sub-conscious there is no change in the conscious. "The objective mind cannot produce any change in the personality by itself, the two aspects are co-relative: the conscious mind acts, the sub-conscious re-acts; the conscious mind produces impressions, the sub-conscious, expressions; the objective or conscious determines what is to be done, the subjective or sub-conscious supplies the mental material and

the necessary power. Everything that is expressed through personality was impressed on the sub-conscious by the conscious, and since conscious mind can impress anything on the sub-conscious, any desired expression may be obtained. The sub-conscious is the soil, every conscious act is a seed sown, that will bear fruit after its kind if properly watered by intensity of feeling." If we impress the sub-conscious with emotions of fear, anger, hatred or anything else, good or bad, the like will grow in the fields of the sub-conscious in due course of time and under appropriate conditions, the essential condition being depth of feeling. It is in this way that man is affected by his environment and surroundings.

The sub-conscious is the "Great Within" which is eternal. It absorbs good and bad impressions in order to discharge its life force at the right moment for the benefit or destruction of the personality. It comes into the body at birth as a spark from the Superconscious. "It is seated equally in all beings, the Supreme lord, unperishing within the perishing" (XIII. 28). "It is the same in being and yet seated distributively. THAT is to be known as the supporter of beings. He devours and he generates" (XIII. 17). The objective consciousness is the result of our impressions from without, which

begin to play their part at birth, and come to an end with the death of the physical body. The subjective consciousness is continuous, passing on from one incarnation to another, it never dies, it is the embodied soul described in the Vedānta, with impressions of the past, accumulations of the present and eliminations of the future. It is Purusha of the Sāṁkhya philosophy.

These two aspects of the mind are the two beings mentioned in the Gītā (XV. 16). The transient, which exists in all created beings during their physical life, is the objective mind, and the intransient, uncreate, is the subjective mind, which comes to every individual as a part of the universal consciousness. This is the basis of the Advaita philosophy.

The superconscious, the highest energy which sustains the three worlds : Svarga, Pātāla and Prithvi, is the Indestructible Lord. Since it excels the destructible, that is the objective or conscious, and is more excellent than the indestructible or sub-conscious, it is proclaimed in the world and in the Vedās as the Purushottama, that is the Supreme Spirit (XV. 17, 18).

In proper, healthy and normal conditions of life the objective and subjective minds act in perfect harmony with each other, and healthy, happy conditions prevail. But unfortunately

these two minds are not always permitted to work in perfect harmony, and the result is mental disturbance, physical wrong-doing, and functional and organic diseases.

That man has two minds is proved by the fact that while the conscious mind sleeps under the influence of an anæsthetic all the voluntary activity is stopped, but the sub-conscious is still alive, receptive to ideas and readily responsive to suggestions. The sub-conscious activities such as the beating of the heart, respiration and the movement of the intestines, go on undisturbed even though the man be completely under the influence of the anæsthetic. The sub-conscious mind can never become unconscious, if it were poisoned by the anæsthetic or otherwise, all the functions of the body would cease and death would immediately follow. To understand this duality of the mind, one has only to recall what a hypnotist can do with a subject who is under his influence. His suggestions bring about for a time the suspension of the functioning of the conscious or reasoning mind, while the sub-conscious continues to be active and energetic. When the subject is in this condition he will do, at the suggestion of the operator, many foolish things which he would not normally do if his objective mind were active.

CHAPTER III

The inherent qualities of the sub-conscious and of the conscious mind, and their modifications in individuals.
(*Daiva-asura-sampat-vibhāga-yoga*).

GÎTĀ CHAPTER XVI

In the metaphysical teachings of the Gîtā, the conscious and the sub-conscious are considered as being endowed with certain inherent qualities. The qualities of the sub-conscious are fearlessness, purity of life, perseverance in gaining knowledge, charity, self-control, sacrifice, study of the Vedas, austerity or asceticism, sincerity, harmlessness, truthfulness, freedom from anger, generosity, tranquillity of mind, absence of cunning, compassion to all, gentleness, modesty and absence of fickleness (XVI. 1, 2, 3). These qualities are the wisdom (Jnyāna) which the sub-conscious brings for the contemplation of the conscious.

This attribution of divine qualities to the sub-conscious marks an important difference between the metaphysical psychology of the East and the

materialistic psychology of the West. The method of the psycho-analyst is to bring the pent-up energy of repressed emotions from the sub-conscious into the conscious, there to be directed to physical manifestation. This keeps the patient bound to the objects of desire, and the chances are all in favour of a recurrence of the disordered mental state. The cure is not permanent. In the metaphysical method, the energy is directed to the gaining of the wisdom of the embodied sub-conscious, and as this is allied to the Super-conscious the individual comes into true relationship with the Universal Soul; he forgets entirely the material world and becomes in tune with the Infinite. No lapses from this state are possible, the cure is permanent.

Any qualities other than the divine qualities of the subjective consciousness belong to the objective consciousness, they are born of ignorance, *i.e.* absence of the wisdom of the sub-conscious. These qualities are the result of the desires which arise from too great attention to the impressions produced on the conscious mind by means of the organs of sense. In this way arise hypocrisy, vanity, self-conceit, cruelty and lack of wisdom; these and other impure motives prompt the individual to wrong action (XVI. 10). These properties of the objective mind, being in

their nature opposite to the divine qualities are described as demoniacal (Asuric—not divine). Persons possessed of these qualities take the Visible for the Real and think that man's desire is the cause of the universe; being too much occupied with the satisfaction of the desires produced by external objects, they do not believe in any unseen cause, nor do they understand that everything in the universe is ruled by law. "Thus deluded by ignorance, tossed about by conflicting thoughts, surrounded by a web of delusion and attached to the enjoyment of objects of desire, they fall into a hell of impurity" (XVI. 16).

When once these ideas—that the world is devoid of truth, of fixed principles and of a ruler, and that the sole cause of the universe is human desire—have become firmly fixed in the objective consciousness of an individual, he has lost the means of communicating with the sub-conscious, through which alone the super-conscious can be reached, and therefore is untouched by the influence of the divine qualities.

But, it may be asked, if the embodied subjective consciousness has all the divine qualities and is the same in everyone, why are some men inclined to evil and some to good? Why should this consciousness be embodied in men who,

because of their heredity, are destined to evil? To explain this, the Author of the Gîtâ takes us to the source from which the sub-conscious emanates, according to the Sâṁkhya philosophy. Of all the six schools of Hindu philosophy, this system, founded by the great sage Kapila, appeals most to the scientific mind, and its teachings are quite in accordance with the conclusions of modern science. The teaching resolves itself into five great principles. First—that the universe is created from eternal cosmic matter (Prakriti), and is an evolution from the unmanifest to the manifest. Prakriti (matter) and Purusha (spirit) are both without beginning, and all material forms, with their qualities are born from matter. So long as spirit and matter are separated manifestation does not take place, a combination of the two is necessary for manifestation. Though spirit joins with matter to produce manifestation, it does not of itself produce any material thing. What is produced by Spirit is the feeling or realisation of pleasure or pain arising from material causes. Any object, mobile or immobile, which impresses itself on our consciousness, is the product of union between the body (Kshetra-Vyakta) and the spirit (Kshetrajña-Avyakta), *i.e.* the field and the knower of the field (XIII. 27). Cosmic matter (Mula-prakriti) is endowed with

three qualities, Spiritual (Sāttvic), Material (Rājasic) and Wayward (Tāmasic), and these three qualities are equally balanced in the Prakriti. The first of these qualities is concerned with the enlightenment of the mind through the knowledge of the Eternal. The second produces craving for and attachment to objects, whether material or spiritual and binds the spirit with the bond of action. The third produces a state of indifference, carnality and inactivity, which deludes the spirit and binds it down into time and apathy.

As individuals pass from life to life the equal balance of these three qualities is disturbed, and one or the other predominates ; so when Purusha joins Prakriti to produce new births it attaches itself to the predominant quality, and men are born accordingly "in good or evil wombs" (XIII. 22). That portion of Mula-prakriti which is joined with Purusha to produce the body is the Vyakta ; while the embodied spirit the sub-conscious self, which is "imperishable within the perishable" is the Avyakta.

This account of the sub-conscious with its attached qualities prepares the way for the second great principle which is that every manifestation must have a visible or invisible cause. It does not arise out of nothing. All the actions of an individual, both mental and physical, have their

origin in the impressions which the sub-conscious has received in this or past lives. All impressions made on the sub-conscious whether good, bad or indifferent, will produce thoughts corresponding to those impressions, and these thoughts will pass on to the objective mind (Buddhi) to produce conditions in the personality similar to themselves.

The third principle is a corollary to the second: The effect lies in the cause. The man is said to be a reflection of his thought, that is, the body with its mental and physical fields, is fashioned according to his thought. Our divine or brutish qualities are effects created by the impressions on the sub-conscious of our good or bad thoughts.

As a corollary to this third principle we have the fourth: The breaking up of the effects causes the unmanifest in the body (the subjective consciousness) to come into prominence. If we control thought and its manifestation, if, that is, we prevent all physical and mental manifestations, the creative power of the sub-conscious, which is produced by impressions, is destroyed. There being nothing left from past or present lives to produce effects, the sub-conscious returns to consciousness with all its original divine qualities, and makes itself manifest or comes into existence again.

The first three laws of reasoning are based on the supposition that all is mind, and that mind works from within outward, but it seems futile to deny the existence of matter with its form and shape. Nevertheless the persistent attempt to realise that matter apart from mind does *not* exist, tends to eliminate from the mind the consciousness of shape and form and the limitations with which they are associated.

The supposition that there exists a perfect uniformity in the working of these laws forms the fifth postulate of the philosophy of Sāṁkhya.

This knowledge of the working of the mind in its two aspects (conscious and sub-conscious) is the wisdom (Jnyāna) which a man should gain. Having attained this wisdom, he should try to bring into his consciousness all the qualities of the sub-conscious, which is the object to be known (Jnyeyam). In this way he establishes a connection with the Super-conscious, the Supreme Spirit (Jnyānāgamya) the light of all lights which is beyond darkness (XIII. 18).

He who is aware of these conditions of the working of the mental field is the Ego, the Kshetri in the field. He alone illuminates the whole body as the Sun illuminates the whole earth (XIII. 34).

EXPOSITION CHAPTER III

The mental field is outside the physical body, and comes into existence when the body is illuminated by the Ego, that is, when the body becomes active after birth. The way in which the Ego tries to reach the mental field through the physical body is the next point to be explained. When that is clear, the theory of Psychology as given in the Gîtā—the Jnyāna Yoga—is complete.

CHAPTER IV

The mental field reached through Āsvattha in the physical body. (*Purshottama-yoga*)

GÎTĀ CHAPTER XV

So strange, yet learned, is the interpretation put upon the first verse of the fifteenth chapter of the Gîtā, and so persistent are the critics in adhering to that interpretation, that I feel some diffidence in putting forward an entirely different one. Yet to understand the teachings of the Gîtā on the basis already suggested, it is necessary to interpret this verse in an entirely new way, but without any alteration in its construction. In the traditional interpretation, "Aśvattha" is said to be an imaginary tree representing worldly life (Saṁsāra), which is imperishable (Avyayam). There is nothing in the verse to suggest this idea, and I do not think the Author of the Gîtā had this interpretation in mind when he preached his doctrine to Arjuna.

To my mind, the tree Āsvattha, which is perishable, represents a part (Avyayam) of the

organised physical body, and is the connecting link between the mental and the physical fields. This tree has its roots above and its branches below, and its leaves are desires (Chhandāṁsi-yasya-parnāni). He who knows its working, knows the knowable, the object to be known. Now the part of the body which has desires as its leaves, or from which desires spring, is the nervous system, and it is this which is compared to the tree Aśvattha, having its roots above in the brain (Ūrdhva-Mūla). It has been proved by experimental science and pathology that there are certain areas in the brain, more particularly the frontal lobe, the stimulation or extirpation of which produces very little result. A distinctive feature of the human brain is the large size of these silent or latent areas, and it has therefore been supposed that these areas are the seats of the higher intellectual centres and that they retain memories of previous impressions and form organs of thought to produce desires.

The trunk of the tree is the spinal cord, which descends through the spinal column ; its branches in the form of big nerves (Śākhas) are spread upwards and downwards in the body. These branches are nourished by nerve fibres (Guna) which have organic functions ; and these are again nourished by finer nerve buds or terminals

(Pravālah) that receive impressions from surrounding objects, and are intertwined below (Adhah), that is on the skin of the human organism, which organism is the result of past lives (XV. 1, 2).

This Aśvattha tree has ever been recognised as the physical manifestation of the Absolute in the world of life, and attracts towards itself the impressions of surrounding objects gained by the roving senses and the mind.

The tree itself does not know its own beginning or end, or the value of its qualities. It is only by making this Aśvattha non-impressionable to surrounding objects that the mental field is reached and the connection is made between the sub-conscious and the Super-conscious, the Supreme Spirit. Once that connection is made man no longer desires the fruits of the physical field.

The mind inhabits the border-land between the mental and physical fields, and is the medium by which physical impressions are carried to the objective and thence to the subjective. When the Aśvattha is destroyed, that is made non-impressionable, there is nothing left for the mind to carry from the physical to the objective consciousness and thence to the subjective, and consequently nothing which the Ego can use to create consciousness in these two

aspects. The activities of the mind being thus at an end, no more impressions of any kind are made either upon the subjective or the objective consciousness. The objective consciousness, which came into existence at birth, receiving no more impressions from the physical field, becomes inactive. The subjective consciousness, receiving nothing more from the objective, generates no new actions (Sanchit-Karma) but continues to rule in the mental field with its experiences of the past unobstructed, and it also continues to stimulate the involuntary actions of the body and so keep it alive. It is this subjective or sub-conscious mind that permeates the soil, that is, the body (Gāmāvisya), and supports it with its vital energy. It is the seat of memory, perception and judgment. The activity of the sub-conscious is kept up by the fluid (Soma) secreted by the moon; this fluid nourishes all the "herbs", that is the different parts of the autonomic nervous system, those parts which control the vital organs of the body and their activities, the beating of the heart, respiration, the movement of the intestines, and the various digestive and other processes. Though there may be no visible activity of the body, yet these sub-conscious activities will keep the body alive (XV. 13, 14).

The mention of the herbs, as well as the Aśvattha tree, seems to show that the Author of the Gītā was acquainted with the independent autonomic nervous system, as well as with the cerebro-spinal one. The nerves of the autonomic system form independent nerve units, having their own centres or roots in the brain. Their function is to supply the energy to those organs of the body which carry on the vital functions of circulation, respiration, etc. without which the body cannot live. These independent nerve units are maintained, (even when all other bodily activities which are controlled by the Aśvattha tree, the cerebro-spinal nervous system, are in abeyance) by the rhythmic falling on these centres of the secretion of the moon, that is of the moon-shaped ventricles of the brain.

The Author of the Gītā therefore says that all who desire to obtain final emancipation must first try to gain the knowledge of the Embodied Self (Saguna-Brahma). The creative energy of this Self must then be directed to the realisation of the Absolute. The gaining of this realisation puts an end to the embodied subconsciousness with all the impressions that have been made upon it in past lives.

To gain this consciousness of the sub-conscious that is embodied in us, we must

control the energies of the Aśvattha (the cerebro-spinal nervous system) that is, all voluntary attempts to satisfy desires. This is only possible to those who are without egoism and delusion, who have overcome all attractions to evil, who dwell constantly in the Self, whose desires are subdued, and who are liberated from the pairs of opposites, such as pleasure and pain.

CHAPTER V

Educating the mind by physical knowledge (Sāṁkhya—mārga.)

GĪTĀ CHAPTER II

From what has been said about the embodied super-conscious self, it can be seen that it is a tremendous power in the body, which can be made use of to liberate oneself from the cycle of rebirths or to bind oneself to the objects of desire. The inherent qualities of the sub-conscious are divine in nature, and to live in the consciousness of these divine qualities is the birthright of every individual; but unfortunately the organs of sense are so powerful that they make us forgetful of our birthright, and bind us to the objects of sense for the gratification of our desires. When the mind begins to act in the consciousness of these divine qualities it will express them in the personality, and there will no longer exist in the mind thus awakened those qualities which are the outcome of the senses, anger, hatred, malice and hostility, qualities which are demoniacal, that is, not divine. To awaken

this divine consciousness and bring it into the forefront of the mind, to remind us of its qualities and to free us from the web of impressions gathered in past and present lives, is the aim of the teachings of the Gîtā.

Not everyone is capable of the task of arousing that divine consciousness in others; it can only be done by one who understands perfectly the working of three aspects of the mind and who is above all consciousness. There could be no better person to awake that consciousness than the Divine Krishna in human form.

Arjuna and Śri Krishna had been in a previous life Nara and Nārāyan, and so Lord Krishna knew the short-comings of Arjuna in that past life. He knew him thoroughly also in his present life, knew his character and mental capacities, his habits and the causes of his grief and inaction.

Arjuna had in Lord Krishna the best of psycho-analysts, one who was able to divest his mind of all the elements of fear and grief by re-establishing the broken harmony between his conscious and sub-conscious states. That break had been brought about by the energy of his repressed emotions of hostility to his cousins; Śri Krishna directed that repressed energy into its proper channels of action.

We have now to consider the methods adopted by Lord Krishna to restore Arjuna to his former mental condition. The liberated energy of his subjective consciousness had not taken the channel it should normally have done, and was manifesting itself in inaction and grief, with associated physical symptoms. To direct that energy to its right channel, Śri Krishna, assuming that the dejection and consequent inaction were temporary, tried by scolding and persuasion to make him realise the sin he would incur by not carrying on war in a righteous cause. He tried to humiliate him by bringing to his mind the shame and dishonour that would be associated with his name, showing him that his inaction on the battlefield would be attributed to fear, and that those who had previously respected him for his power and skill in wielding the bow, would begin to belittle him. He also reminded him of what he would gain if he fought successfully. But Arjuna would not listen and began to make excuses for not engaging in battle. Finding that such materialistic arguments made no impression on him and that he could logically defend his inaction, Śri Krishna saw that the cause of his trouble was not superficial, but so deeply rooted in his mind that it

was not possible to bring it to the surface by mere worldly arguments. He therefore tried to re-educate his mind by metaphysical and psychic methods.

The difference between his methods and the methods of the modern psycho-analyst lies in the fact that the metaphysical process directed the energy generated by the repressed emotions towards the realisation of the Real, and to the conviction that all things are in themselves good and are working together for some greater good; whereas the modern method brings the energy to the surface in order that it may be used for gaining the desired object or diverted into other channels, intellectual or physical, so as to unburden the sub-conscious mind.

The symptoms of the patient indicate the point at which the rebuilding or re-educating process should begin. At first he resists all attempts to ascertain those symptoms, but the personal influence of the physician gradually breaks down this resistance and the repressed emotions and repressed activity are brought to light, their true nature is exposed, and solutions and re-adjustments suggested.

A change is often noticed in the attitude of the patient as the re-education proceeds—the emotions and ideas that were formerly associated

with various objects are transferred to the physician, that is, the repressed psychic energy invents ideas and actions which enable the emotions to be liberated upon a person other than the one originally causing them. The physician is then able to re-transfer the suppressed emotions to legitimate objects and the conflict caused by the repression is at an end. The mind of the patient thus becomes once more a homogeneous unity, and is assisted and encouraged to adapt itself to life or to the realisation of the Real.

During the process, no mention is made of the unpleasant cause of the conflict. The Author of the Gītā, though he knew the cause of Arjuna's inaction, did not mention it as it would not have helped him to unburden his sub-conscious mind even if he had believed it, which he probably would not have done. It would have been simply to ask him to believe, on the authority of another, what he had already refused to realise or even consider, and the mention of it would merely have worried and annoyed him.

Arjuna's original repressed emotions were a constant source of energy and emotion which he could not control, as he did not know their origin. The Lord saw that he must be made actually to liberate that energy, and not merely to argue about it.

Śri Krishna, knowing Arjuna's conviction that visible manifestations were real and that nothing existed beyond them, so that if he killed his relations they would be permanently lost to him, tried to convince him that all that is visible is not real. The belief that the visible was the real, was the real starting point of the train of mental and physical symptoms that he exhibited on the battlefield.

To convince Arjuna that the visible was *not* the real Lord Krishna had to explain to him the theory of cause and effect as laid down by Kapila in his Sāṁkhya philosophy. The matter which becomes manifest to us through our organs of sense, producing sensations of heat and cold, pleasure and pain, which appear and disappear, is not real, it has no continuity. The man who is not affected by these manifestations, who is not moved by pleasure or pain, is steadfast and fitted for immortality.

Matter, of whatever kind, is not manifest to us unless we have the sense of awareness. This condition is not inherent in the limbs or in the eyes or the ears or any part of the body. The dead body has no sense of awareness, it is the property of that which resides in the living body, the Ego, the soul, or the subjective consciousness.

This Ego is abstract, unknowable, and cannot

be perceived by the senses. The material forms in which this eternal, indestructible, immeasurable One exists are finite. Both he who regards this dweller in the body as a slayer, or he who thinks that he is slain are alike ignorant of the true nature of the Real. The Embodied Self is not born, nor does it die. The sub-conscious mind is not born with the body, but presides over it, being itself unborn, perpetual, eternal and ancient ; it is therefore not to be slain with the body, it cannot kill nor be killed. When this dweller in the body dissociates itself from its physical form, it enters into another which is new, and carries on its eternal existence. "Weapons cleave him not, nor fire burneth him, nor wind drieth him away." Knowing it to be such, one should not grieve for the destruction of the outer form. Arjuna was unable to accept this explanation of Śri Krishna, because he had not yet experienced the consciousness of this Embodied Eternal. His mental condition was such that he could not accept anything on the mere statement of his master. Śri Krishna, therefore, tells him that even according to his own way of thinking his attitude is wrong, for "Even if you think of the Eternal as constantly born and constantly dying you should not grieve, for it is in conformity with the universal law that

death is certain for the born ".

Reasoning thus according to the postulates of the Sāṁkhya philosophy, the Lord tried to stimulate Arjuna's repressed energy of action. He tried to convince him that the members of the parties ready to fight were changeable, visible, perishable forms and not the Real Self which is the same in every form and body; that when one killed or was killed by another, the manifested form went to the elements from which they emanated, while the unmanifested, the subjective consciousness mingled again with the unmanifested, the Superconscious of which it was a spark. Therefore he bade Arjuna shake off his lethargy, and do his duty as a Kshattriya by fighting his enemies; for there was no need to grieve over killing an opponent in a righteous cause.

Pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, are not the properties of the physical body, but are experienced by the embodied consciousness. One should, therefore, in the physical body, be unmindful of these results, and fight. No sin would be incurred thereby, for the cause was righteous. The Lord adds force to his argument by saying: "Having regard to your own duty also, you ought not to falter, for there is nothing better for a Kshattriya

than to fight in a righteous battle". Arjuna was not inclined to accept this abstract argument; he had considered Śri Krishna as his equal, and we do not readily accept advice which comes to us from our equals or inferiors, though we often accept it readily enough if it comes from a superior whether in rank or mental capacity. Arjuna was no exception to this rule, and so Śri Krishna told him that he had not been merely uttering his own ideas, but had the authority of the Sāṁkhya philosophy.

This metaphysical method of rebuilding the mind, prevents superficial mental action by deepening thought so that it may understand real action. It prevents bondage to the limitation of form by awakening consciousness of the Reality which animates forms, and at the same time prevents the creation of imperfect conditions by producing in the mind the realisation of the sub-conscious.

Śri Krishna, after making Arjuna realise the knowledge of the Self by reasoning about the physical manifestations of the unmanifest, now initiates him into the mysteries of the Self and its working by Yoga, that is by spiritual or psychic methods. When these are known and practised, the individual is freed from the bondage of action.

CHAPTER VI

Educating the mind by psychic knowledge

(*Buddhi-yoga-mārga*)

GĪTĀ CHAPTER II (*Continued*)

In this method of gaining knowledge of the Self, no effort is lost, however small that effort may be, and consequently there is no disappointment; even a little knowledge of this Self (Dharmasya) protects an individual from great fear. The reasoning or voluntarily controlled mind can only contemplate one thing at a time, that is to say, when the attention is directed, "with will and determination" to one particular thought or idea, no other thought or idea can displace it. This law of the working of the mind is taken advantage of by Śri Krishna, and he advises Arjuna to make a voluntary effort to control his objective or created mind and direct it to the contemplation of a state of perfection. The minds of those who do not make this effort, branch off in many directions, and are more or less at the mercy of the senses and their manifestations. Such an irresolute mind is not fit

for the practice of Yoga.

The Vedas speak of the three qualities of the mind—spiritual (Sāttvic), material (Rājasic) and vicious or wayward (Tāmasic). Arjuna is advised to rise above the effects of these qualities (Nistraigunya), to become indifferent to the pairs of opposites, to become attached to the divine qualities of the Embodied Self (Nityasatvastha) instead of to worldly objects and to merge himself in the Self, (Niryoga-kshema). A man who is moved by pleasures and hardships, and who allows his mind to be disturbed by them, has not the strength of will necessary for the practice of Yoga.

The Sāṁkhya philosophy prepares the mind for the practice of Yoga, which is the highest and most powerful of philosophies. It has however one disadvantage—it intensifies energy, but does not direct it. Consequently, if it is practised by those who are strongly attached to pleasure or power, who are attracted by that flowery talk about specific acts that lead to the attainment of power which offers only re-birth as the fruit of action, it is decidedly dangerous, because the increase of power which it brings is used in a wrong way and entails serious consequences. Yoga should only be used for obtaining realisation of divine qualities and for the building of

character, never for obtaining the objects of desire. Lord Śri Krishna advises his disciple to direct his objective consciousness towards the sub-conscious, in which the perfect Real, the Super-conscious Self is a predominating factor, without seeking for result from his actions. When this sense of perfection is awakened in the objective consciousness, he is not to be satisfied with the enjoyment brought by it, and give up the practice of Yoga, but is to press on still further, renouncing all desire for and attachment to external things, until he has drawn all the qualities of the subjective consciousness into the objective, and the two can work absolutely in unison. This unity of working in the two minds is called Yoga (Samatvam-yoga-oochyate). This complete identification of the objective with the subjective consciousness for the purpose of realising the still higher consciousness is the most difficult form of Yoga (Nirvikalpa-samādhi).

In this Yoga, our physical activity is inhibited, and so the average man cannot practise it while following his ordinary avocations. Śri Krishna, therefore, says that if you cannot follow this Yoga which leads to inaction, you must follow that which leads to action, even though that is somewhat lower. In the Yoga of action, the objective consciousness is guided from within by the

subjective consciousness and not from without by the impressions derived from the organs of sense. These impressions from without make the objective consciousness work for results—for the gratification of the senses; but when the objective consciousness works according to the dictates of the sub-conscious, the question of results, whether good or bad, does not arise, for actions are performed by it merely as the agent of the sub-conscious—this is true Yoga, "skill in action." (Yogah-karmasu Kausalam). The wise, who have so united their two states of consciousness, and care no more for results, are free from the fetters of rebirth, and reach the state which is beyond all evil.

As it is only the man with a stable mind, steadfast in contemplation, who can attain this Yoga, Arjuna now enquires what are the qualities of such a man, how does he talk, work, sit, walk and so on. This question is probably an unconscious attempt on Arjuna's part to hide the sore spot on his sub-conscious mind, which his conscious self fears to uncover, because of the pain it would cause. This shows that his objective consciousness, which has so long been under the dominion of external conditions is now being drawn inwards, and is beginning to think reasonably. In answer to his question

Śri Krishna defines the qualities of the stable-minded person. He is one who suppresses all desires and emotions arising in the conscious mind, and directs the energy thus acquired towards the Embodied consciousness that it may obtain the divine qualities. He is one who is free from anxiety amid troubles, indifferent amid pleasures, free from passion, fear and anger, without attachment, without likes and dislikes, and not bound to the objects of sense. The self-indulgent dweller in the body is constantly receiving impressions from the objects of sense, but the stable-minded does not relish them, his repressed energy is not let loose for the gratification of desires produced by them. All relish for the objects of sense disappears when the energy derived from repressed desires is directed to the realisation of the Self. Even a wise man, who is making a genuine effort to control his mind, may sometimes be led astray if he is excited by his senses; the objective consciousness for a time gets the upper hand, and may once more become attached to the objects of desire. This attachment impels the sub-conscious mind to produce energy to satisfy the demands of the sense impressions. If for some reason or other, within or without his physical self, the desire

is not satisfied, the energy is driven back to the sub-conscious. This produces anger, and that, being also repressed, produces loss of memory, and disharmony between the sub-conscious and the conscious, for the conscious mind receiving no force from behind to enable it to gratify its desires, becomes inactive and goes to pieces. A man whose objective mind has been trained to look up to the sub-conscious, is free from attraction or repulsion, even though he is surrounded by the objects of sense ; being guided by the sub-conscious, he is free from all pain and his objective mind remains well-poised and at peace. He whose objective consciousness is not directed towards the sub-conscious cannot keep his consciousness pure, for it is constantly being liberated for the gratification of his senses. When the mind is unsteady, the consciousness is also unsteady, and without fixed determination there is no concentration, and consequently no peace. The objective consciousness which is led away by the roving senses, is like a boat, tossed about on a rough sea by a gale.

Normally the subjective consciousness is asleep when the objective consciousness is active. During the day the objective consciousness is doing its work while the subjective

consciousness is lying dormant. It is only during the night, when all the voluntary functions of the physical body are at a standstill, that the subjective consciousness wakes up and does its work of enforcing upon the objective consciousness the impressions of the desires and emotions it has received.

He who meditates and concentrates upon the object of desire, can, by controlling his mind, wake up the dormant subjective consciousness in him at any moment so as to give a creative impulse to the sub-conscious mind and so gain the object of desire. If the object be worldly, the creative impulse is transferred to the objective mind for the production of the necessary physical function to gain it, but if the object be final emancipation, the creative force generated in the sub-conscious is directed towards gaining through the sub-conscious, the knowledge of the Super-conscious.

He alone obtains that peace, whose objective consciousness remains unmoved, and not he whose consciousness is ever ready to satisfy desires. Lord Śri Krishna, therefore advises Arjuna to strive to reach that state of Super-consciousness (Brāhmi-sthiti), by forsaking all desires, all egoism, and becoming selfless. Once that stage is reached, no more

bewilderment is felt. He who enters this stage of super-consciousness, even on his death-bed, attains final beatitude (Brahma-Nirvāna).

CHAPTER VII

Knowledge of emancipation by action. (*Karma-yoga*)

GĪTĀ CHAPTER III

The sub-conscious mind, which comes into the body at birth with all its past impressions, forces man to action according to the predominant quality with which it is associated. The man who controls the activity of the body, while allowing his sub-conscious mind to be impressed by desires, is a hypocrite. These impressions influence the sub-conscious mind of such a man, and are temporarily repressed, so that his objective consciousness, which is concerned with physical manifestations for the gratification of desire, remains inactive. The energy obtained by this repression will be liberated sometime or other for gaining the objects of desire under favourable conditions. A man whose mind is really controlled, does not allow the sub-conscious to be impressed, then, there being nothing for the sub-conscious to work upon, there is no response from the conscious to the organs of

sense, and they are not attached to the objects of desire. In this way nothing new is impressed on the sub-conscious and no new Karma is generated (Sanchit-Karma).

A man who uses the energy produced by repressing the activity of the organs of sense for gaining the knowledge of the subjective consciousness, continues to perform action, and the action done in accordance with the knowledge so gained is right action (Niyata Karma).

If right action is not performed according to the dictates of the sub-conscious mind, certain vital activities of the body, which are controlled by the sub-conscious, will come to a standstill also, with the result that the body will die. Right action therefore is better than inaction.

This statement of Śri Krishna about action seemed paradoxical to Arjuna. It seemed to him that Śri Krishna had been advising him to learn how to merge the objective consciousness into the subjective, according to the Sāṁkhya philosophy, a process which leads a man ultimately to inaction, and now was advising him to action in order that he might attain final emancipation. Arjuna's misunderstanding is due to the fact that he understands action to mean the direction of the objective consciousness towards gaining the objects of desire, or the gratification

of the senses. He therefore quite naturally asks his Master why, if the gaining of metaphysical knowledge is superior to action, he should be forced into this fearful action of engaging in battle.

Śri Krishna is trying to bring to the consciousness of Arjuna the sore spots on his sub-conscious, and Arjuna's constant interruptions in the course of the teaching, show his sensitiveness as the sore spots are approached. The Master, seeing that Arjuna is now taking an intelligent interest in his teachings, tries to remove the misunderstanding of the word 'action' from his pupil's mind.

He says: There are two ways in which the objective consciousness may be merged into the subjective. One is by virtue of a knowledge of the doctrines of the Sāṁkhya, that is by perception, inference and revelation. This is a process of involution, in which the organs of sense are subdued, so that they may not convey their impressions to the sub-conscious mind, it works from without, inwards, and thus controls the mind.

The second is the psychic method which the Yogi follows. This is a process of evolution, and works from within outwards. In this process the mind is controlled at its very source, and

thought, its creative energy, is directed to take its inspiration from the sub-conscious, so that it may work through the conscious mind without any restriction or interference.

By controlling physical activity a man does not obtain freedom from action, nor obtain final emancipation. Indeed it is not possible for him to abstain entirely from action for he is driven to it unavoidably by the quality of the impressions made on his sub-conscious in past lives.

In support of this statement, the Author of the Gîtâ explains the whole machinery of action as described in the Scriptures. (see the Praśnopanishad). The Lord of beings (Prajâpati) having in ancient times created mankind by the sacrifice of himself (Saha-yajnâh), becoming in them the sub-conscious, said:—"Let this be to you the source and giver of the object of desire (Kâma-dhuk)" The impressions of the objects of desire, when accompanied by feeling, are recorded on the sub-conscious mind and are liberated to achieve them. Thus the sub-conscious in this life generates desires that were impressed upon it in past lives. The organs of sense and action (Devâh) are nourished by these impressions. These desires, impressed on the sub-conscious by the organs of sense, are liberat-

ed by the organs of action and the result is the gratification of the senses. This mutual action, between the sub-conscious, the organs of sense and the organs of action, enables man to attain the highest good by helping the sub-conscious to free itself from all past impressions (desires). He who allows his organs of action to receive impressions from within, but does not liberate those impressions into action, is like a thief. His organs of action receive without giving any adequate return. The proper return consists in liberating those impressions into action. The righteous liberate the impressions of desire and are blameless, but the unrighteous, who keep their desires fixed on their organs, so as to act as food for them, commit sin because they do not discharge the energy of impressions for their gratification.

Food, in the form of vital energy (Prāna) supports all life. The cosmic impulse, that throbs all round us, enters the body as the chief Prāna, at birth, and gives life to it. It differentiates itself into five varieties (Panchaprāna), to take charge of the different functions of the body. The organs of action and of knowledge are alike dependent for their activity upon these vital energies, without which they would be starved into inactivity, and become

useless, for these organs lose their functions and become atrophied if they are not used. The stimulation of these organs by the vital activities, acts as food to them and keeps them in working order; just as rain stimulates corn to growth, so do desires stimulate these human energies to action. The liberation of impressions (Yajnyāt) on the sub-conscious mind causes desires. These impressions are themselves the result of past actions, and these past actions had their source in the sub-conscious (Brahma). The sub-conscious is the embodied spark of the Super-conscious, the Imperishable (Akshara). The sub-conscious, therefore, is the all-permeating (Sarva-gata) source of action and is constantly forcing men into activity. He who does not obey this wheel of action, which is set revolving by his own impressions on the sub-conscious material, indulges his senses and leads a sinful life. He is not living to liberate his sub-conscious spirit, his spark of the Super-conscious, and therefore he lives in vain. So Śri Krishna exhorts Arjuna to perform action constantly, as a duty, without attachment to results, in order that he may reach the Supreme. To illustrate his meaning he mentions the sage-king Janaka and others who attained perfection by doing action as duty.

He tells Arjuna also that it is not only for his own sake that he should be active, but for the sake of showing others the right path, for men usually follow the example of the great. He shows how he himself does this :—"As a divine being I have nothing that it is my duty to do, nor in all the three worlds is there anything for me to gain, yet I mingle in action so that people may follow my example. If I did not do so, I should be a cause of confusion and ruin to everyone."

A wise man should not interfere with the action of those who still act with attachment to the objects of sense, but he should set them an example by acting according to the qualities of the sub-conscious, without any attachment. All actions really originate in the sub-conscious, and are in accordance with the qualities that have become attached to it, but the objective consciousness, which grows with the body and which is ignorant of the source of its inspiration, thinks of itself as the doer. He who knows the qualities and their functions, knows that the subjective consciousness which is embodied in us, attracts towards itself those qualities in nature which are akin to those which itself possesses, for like attracts like, and so it impels the objective consciousness to carry out its injunctions in

conformity with those qualities and not by forming attachments with the outer objects of sense. Here the action is started from within outwards. In the case of those who do not know this, the external objects of sense impress the sub-conscious from without inwards and the objective consciousness acts in accordance with those impressions, that is the actions they do, are done from attachment to the objects of sense. A wise man who understands both these ways of working should not interfere with the actions of those whose knowledge is imperfect, because such interference is useless so long as they continue to act according to the impressions made on the sub-conscious from without. When we know that the sub-conscious, the Embodied Self, is part of the Super-conscious, the Supreme Self, we must ascribe all action to it. Śri Krishna advises Arjuna to bring this fact to his consciousness (Chetas) and to engage in battle without desire, without egoism, and without any mental anxiety to hinder him.

Every man who follows these teachings of the divine Author of the Gîtā with faith (Shraddhā) and without carping or cavilling, and who acts according to the dictates of the subjective consciousness, is engaged in liberating the sub-conscious self from past attachments, and as no

new impressions are being formed on the sub-conscious, owing to the control of the mind, there is nothing to bring the sub-conscious into the forefront of the conscious, and he is released from future action. Even those, who have this knowledge of the working of the two aspects of the mind, must act in conformity with the attached qualities of the sub-conscious, until these are restored to the perfect balance of the Super-conscious. It is the law that all beings must follow nature, and to restrict their actions from without, while there is still the embodied activity within the sub-conscious, will be useless.

All affections and aversions have their source in the organs and the objects of sense. These obstruct the doing of right action, and no-one should allow himself to be controlled by them. It is better to act, however meanly and insignificantly, according to the dictates of one's own consciousness, than to do the bidding of another. The Author of the Gîtā even goes so far as to say that it is better to die as the result of following one's own consciousness, than to save one's life by following the advice of someone else. He wishes to impress upon his disciples that they should not be guided by the sub-conscious minds of others in the performance of their own duty, because, if they do, they may become the tools

of those who guide them. Action done according to the dictates of another, is full of danger (Para-dharmo-bhayāvahah).

These teachings of Śri Krishna about the workings of the mind, cleared away many of Arjuna's doubts, yet there still remained another question—Why is a man compelled to do a bad action against his will ? The answer given to him is that the cause of this compulsion is to be found in desire and in anger, which are born from the Rājasic quality of nature. The sub-conscious was attached to this quality when it was embodied. Desires have their abode in the organs of sense, in the mind and in the objective consciousness, and by these the purity of the sub-conscious is enveloped and deluded. By mastering the senses one can do away with these desires which destroy the wisdom and knowledge of the sub-conscious.

The senses are a great source of energy, greater than the senses is the mind, greater than the mind is the objective consciousness, but the greatest of all is the embodied sub-conscious. Therefore, knowing that the sub-conscious is the greatest source of energy, one should try to control the physical activity of the body—that is the very physical self—through the agency of the sub-conscious and thus destroy the desires that

surround it.

Lord Śri Krishna, in this explanation of right action, indirectly appeals to Arjuna to kill his enemies who have been the cause of desire and anger, thus controlling the physical self which has given way to outside impressions due to physical energy.

CHAPTER VIII

Action, inaction and perverted action (Karma-jnyāna-vibhāga-yoga)

GÎTĀ CHAPTER IV

Śri Krishna tried further to impress upon Arjuna's mind the importance of merging the objective consciousness into the imperishable subjective consciousness by telling him of the antiquity of this knowledge. It was first preached by him to Vivasvata, Vivasvata handed down the knowledge to Manu, and Manu imparted it to the royal sages, Janaka and others. After this, there being no proper person worthy of receiving this knowledge, it was lost sight of, and now this profound secret of the ancient knowledge is retold to Arjuna, his devotee and friend.

Arjuna could not understand how his Master could have imparted knowledge to those who lived so long before him, so Śri Krishna explained that both he and Arjuna had had many previous births, which Arjuna had forgotten, while he himself remembered them all.

The sub-conscious mind of the materialist, is, like Arjuna's, so engrossed in generating energy by means of external impressions, that it has no opportunity of exhibiting its qualities or manifesting its existence to the fullest extent. It is guided to action almost entirely by the objects of sense. Whenever this nature, this sub-conscious mind, which comes to everyone as a part of Prakriti, is overpowered by the objective consciousness, its divine attributes are brought to nought by unrighteous actions. The subjective mind, having thus no outlet for its own energy, broods over its own divine attributes, and though in reality unborn and imperishable, appears in human form again and again, bringing with it those attributes in order to preserve whatever is good in man and to destroy what is bad.

This explanation of the re-birth of the subjective consciousness explains to us the continuity of the sub-conscious in men in their successive births. When the suppressed energy of the divine qualities is fully discharged, the sub-conscious is no longer impressible from within or from without. It then, being fully evolved in action, dissociates itself from the body, never to be born again, and blends itself into that Super-consciousness from which it

emanated. Those who have conquered anger and fear, who are free from attachment to worldly objects, who act in accordance with the sub-conscious, and know its divine qualities, are liberated from the cycle of rebirth.

Men have many different motives for impressing the sub-conscious, but whatever their motive may be, if the impression is made with sufficiently strong feeling, their desires are fulfilled. In this worldly life, most men try to impress their minds with the glittering objects of desire, and these are much more easily obtainable than the desire for the knowledge of the sub-conscious self.

When the sub-conscious self, after leaving the physical body, once more joins Prakriti in preparation for a new birth, it attaches itself to that quality of matter from which it received most impressions when it was last embodied. The resulting combinations are classified into four groups according to the quality of those impressions. The highest is that form of spirit-matter (purusha-prakriti) which is suitable for Yogis who desire to merge their objective consciousness in the subjective. The next variety is given to that group of saintly characters who desire to use their objective consciousness for the realisation of the divine

qualities of the sub-conscious. The third is suitable for materialists, who impress the sub-conscious with the external objects of sense, but in a discriminating manner, while the fourth goes to those vicious persons whose sole object is the gratifying of their desires by means of the organs of sense, and who thus allow the objective consciousness to gain supremacy over the subjective.

Though all actions arise from impressions made on the sub-conscious, yet the sub-conscious is not the real doer, as it is the non-acting part of the body. As the sub-conscious self does not take part in the physical activity of the body, it cannot have any longing for the results of action. It is the physical body alone that bears the pangs and pleasures arising from the objects of sense. Knowing this, all the ancient seekers after freedom performed their worldly duties. Śri Krishna therefore advises Arjuna to follow their example, and by doing the actions that are his duty, to carry on the war to an end.

So far it has been explained that the sub-conscious is the real originator, though not the real doer of actions. The next step is to explain the difference between action and inaction, which has bewildered even the sages, but which it is essential to understand if freedom from evil is

to be obtained.

There are three kinds of action spoken of—action (Karma), inaction (A-karma), and perverted action (Vi-karma). It is very difficult to understand the difference between them. The Author of the Gîtā enigmatically says that he who sees action in inaction and inaction in action is a Yogi among the doers of action who are endowed with the knowledge of the sub-conscious (Buddhimāna).

We are apt to think that physical activity is the only action, because it is visible, and we do not realise that in creating thought we are doing invisible action with our minds. Thought is manifested in physical activity when it is directed to the exciting of the objective consciousness, but it results in the supression of physical activity when it is directed to the realisation of the subjective consciousness. This happens because the mind of man is one-pointed, it can only hold one thought or one idea at a time. So when there is mental activity there is physical inactivity. The reverse is also true, for physical activity, directed to the gratification of desires, puts a stop to all thought of the understanding of the divine qualities, and mental activity becomes impossible.

Action in the mental state, when visible action is at a standstill, is possible only to those who have merged their objective consciousness in the

subjective, that is, by those Yogis, who have reached the Nirvikalpa form of Samādhi, where all desires are burnt away.

Arjuna had not yet reached the stage of complete inaction, nor was it possible for him to do so in the position in life in which he then was. The Great Master wished him to do action, right action which would help him to gain his object and at the same time lead him to final emancipation. The essential condition for proper visible action is control of the mind. This control does not allow impressions from without to reach the sub-conscious; and so no new Karma is created by the mind to be liberated in future births, by the gratification of desires; but the energy of the impressions of past lives, which the embodied sub-conscious has brought over into this life, must be liberated so, that the sub-conscious may be freed from the shackles of attachment. In this liberation of energy, the present life, if the mind is controlled, has no concern. The physical body, and not the objective consciousness acts as the agent of the sub-conscious whereby it unloads the burden of past unfulfilled actions.

The objective consciousness acts as the agent of the sub-conscious for the present incarnation only, but the physical body acts as its agent for

the past and future ones as well. When ultimately the sub-conscious is freed from the burden of past impressions by doing visible actions, its vehicle the body is finally liberated to gain its emancipation after many incarnations.

When the creative energy of the mind—the thought—has its source in the objects of sense, it excites the objective consciousness to do physical actions to satisfy the cravings of the organs of sense. Here there is absolute lack of self-control, and all action done without self-control is perverted action.

If, bearing in mind this distinction between action and perverted action, all actions are done without affection or aversion, without envy or greed, without caring for success or failure, the individual is not bound to re-birth, because all such actions are done as a sacrifice to free the sub-conscious self, the embodied soul, from bondage.

This performance of action with knowledge of the mental field is summed up by Śri Krishna in the following verse :—"Brahman is the oblation, with Brahman it is offered up in the fire of Brahman, where, by Brahman it is thrown. Brahman is the goal to which he proceeds who meditates upon Brahman in action." There is a play on the word Brahman in this verse. If

we consider the different meanings which are assigned to the word, the meaning of the verse becomes clear, and shows us the way in which the Super-conscious is reached. In the fire of subjective consciousness (Brahmāgnau) the oblation of the intellect, the objective consciousness (Brahmahavis), is offered to the Super-consciousness (Brahmārpanam) by one versed in this sacred knowledge (Brahmanah) and by virtue of meditating on the action of the sub-conscious (Brahma-karma-samādhinā) only such a one reaches the state of Super-consciousness (Brahmaiva).

There are different methods used, according to the different grades of evolution, for reaching the Super-conscious (Brahma). Spiritually minded people (Sāttvic) control the activity of the mental field, wholly or partially in order to reach this stage. A materialist (Rājasic) prepares himself to reach it by restraining the activity of his physical field by renouncing worldly pleasures, by practising austerity, by following the rules of Yoga (as given by Patanjali), by muttering incantations and by vows; while a vicious man (Tāmasic), prepares himself to reach the same stage by subjecting his body to various physical practices, by which he controls his afferent (Prāna) and efferent (Apāna)

impulses, and by means of the process of Prānāyāma. Those not included in any of these classes make themselves physically unfit, by regulating their food, to receive any afferent impulses from outside which might impress the sub-conscious, and send all efferent impulses from within to unburden the sub-conscious and thus try to liberate themselves.

All these people are doing actions, either physically or mentally, in order to reach the divine nature of the sub-conscious, and having reached it, they pass to the eternal Super-conscious State (Sanātana-Brahma). He who does not strive in some way to reach the Eternal Brahma is not fit for this world, much less for any other.

There are many other ways mentioned in the Śrutis for reaching the Eternal. These ways are the result of impressions imprinted on the sub-conscious in past lives. Lord Krishna advises Arjuna to act after learning the knowledge of action, so that he may be released from re-birth.

He then tries to explain which kind of action done for the purpose of reaching the Eternal is superior to the others; those arising from the mental field or those from the physical. He says that the actions arising from the control of

the mind are superior to those which result from the control of the senses, but that all actions, whatever be their origin will ultimately attain their consummation in the knowledge of the Divine. He advises his hearers to obtain their knowledge from expert teachers, by discipleship, by investigation and by service. When the Eternal is cognized, there is no more delusion, and the Eternal is seen in all things. The sub-conscious minds of all men are identical, because they come from the Supreme. Just as a blazing fire reduces wood to ashes, so the fire of this spark of the Eternal reduces all actions to ashes. There is no greater purifier in the world than the knowledge of the Eternal Self. In due time after many incarnations, having gained perfection in the performance of action (Karma-Yoga), one gains the knowledge of the Eternal in one's own self. It is obtainable by those who have faith in action for gaining knowledge and who have mastered their senses. Having thus gained the knowledge of the Self, one passes quickly to the Supreme Peace (Parā-Śānti).

The ignorant and the faithless, who doubt the existence of the Self, go to destruction; there is no happiness for them in this world or in any other. He who has renounced all physical actions by submerging the objective consci-

ousness in the subjective, he whose doubts about action are rent asunder by the knowledge of the Eternal, and he who is guided to action by his own embodied consciousness—these are not bound by their actions. Arjuna therefore should give up his dejection, and removing all doubts from his mind by the knowledge of this wisdom, should act.

CHAPTER IX

Identity of renunciation of action with performance of action (Sannyāsa-yoga)

GĪTĀ CHAPTER V

Śri Krishna, in the opening verses of the fourth chapter of the Gîtā, preached renunciation of all action to Arjuna and yet in the last three verses of the same chapter, he urges him to action. Arjuna is naturally puzzled by this seeming contradiction and asks him which is the better of the two. The Lord's answer is that performance of action (Karma-Yoga) is superior to renunciation of action (Karma-Sannyāsa), though both ultimately lead to freedom.

Renunciation of action is of two kinds, one which is done with full knowledge of the working of the mental field and its attributes, and the other which is done without that knowledge. Ignorant people renounce all visible action of the physical body and pose as Sannyāsins, though all the time their sub-conscious mind is receiving impressions from

the objects of sense. They only suppress the energy of their impressions for a time, and when it is ultimately liberated they will be completely entangled by the objects of sense. Though their physical activity is stopped, the generation of Karma is not. This kind of renunciation is only practised by hypocrites, as mentioned in the third chapter.

The true renunciation of action is practised by a Jnyâni, who has the metaphysical knowledge taught by the philosophy of the Sâṁkhya. He suppresses both mental and physical activity so as to prevent the generation of new Karma (Sanchit) and to destroy that which is fully ripe (Prârabdha). This renunciation is only possible to those who have no attachment to the things of the world, and who are in union with the Infinite, the Super-conscious. This certainly is not the renunciation which is meant by the Author of the Gîtâ when he says that Karma-sannyâsa and Karma-Yoga are identical. Karma-Yoga definitely implies action, and if Karma-Sannyâsa is identical with it, that must be made to mean the same. But the processes of arriving at that action may vary.

If we apply the words Sannyâsa and Yoga to the physical body, they mean renunciation of

and the performance of physical action, and the results are different; but if the words be applied to the sub-conscious, which with its past impressions (Karma) is embodied in us, the results of the working of Sannyāsa and Yoga become identical.

The renunciation of past impressions by the sub-conscious in order to liberate itself results in action. It discharges the impressions attached to the physical body, which are manifested in action. The process of action in this case is from within outwards. In Karma Yoga the objective phase of the mind is joined to the subjective to produce an identical result. The obstructive tendency of the reasoning mind is done away with, and then the sub-conscious rules supreme in the nine-gated city, the body with its nine openings. The web of impressions surrounding the sub-conscious self is handed over to the objective mind for its fulfilment in action by means of the physical body. Here the objective mind acts as the agent of the sub-conscious and not the physical body as in Karma Sannyāsa. The subjective consciousness must be awakened if it is to discharge its impressions on its own initiative. This awakening is very difficult for men living in the material world, even when they

know how the mental states work, and hence Karma-Sannyâsa is almost impossible of achievement by men of the world; but the subjective consciousness can be awakened by psychic methods (Yoga) by controlling the activities of the body, mind, and objective consciousness, and directing the energy gained by such control towards the sub-conscious by meditation and devotion. Action, performed in this way, which excites the subjective consciousness to awaken the subjective mind and cause it to liberate its impressions into manifestation through the action of the physical body, is called Karma-Yoga.

When one knows that the source of action is the Embodied Self with its impressions, one is able to perform action without attachment and is as unaffected by sin as a lotus leaf is unaffected by the water that falls upon it. Karma Yogis, having abandoned attachment and the desire for the fruits of action, perform actions, not for the satisfaction of their desires, but for the purification of the Embodied Self, and when that is completed, they attain Eternal Peace. Though the sub-conscious self is said to be the source of all action, that does not mean that it is the agent or doer of the action, nor does it imply any connection with or desire for, the fruit of action. The real agent or doer is the sum of the im-

pressions (Swabhāva) received by it in past lives, and therefore the results of the actions do not concern the Embodied Self. When the envelope of impressions around the sub-conscious is destroyed by being manifested in actions, the Embodied Self shines out in all the glory of its divine nature, and reaches out towards the Eternal.

In Karma-Yoga, the actions of meditation on or devotion to the sub-conscious are done to help nature to do its work of liberating the sub-conscious from bondage. When the objective consciousness is directed towards 'that' (the sub-conscious) and merged into and made steadfast there by devotion, then men reach THAT (the Super-conscious), then, sins being dispelled by wisdom, they do not wish to return again to their physical bodies to enjoy worldly pleasures.

Sages, when they reach this state, look upon all things—men and animals, rich and poor, high-born or low-born—as equal, because they know that the Eternal Embodied Self, incorruptible and balanced, is the same in themselves and in all others. Those who see this One-ness of the Self in all things, control the agitations produced by desire and passion and even in this world are happy and harmonious.

Rishis, men of right vision and renunciation,

having done away with the dual aspect of the mind by controlling their objective consciousness, and directing it to the sub-conscious to absorb its divine qualities, obtain the Peace of the Eternal (Brahma-Nirvāna). This Peace is also obtained by those who have dissociated themselves from desires and passions, who are guided to action by the impressions on the Embodied Self, who have removed their minds from external contacts by controlling the afferent and efferent (Prāna-Apāna) impulses of the body and by directing their gaze to the root of the nose. Here the Author of the Gîtā refers to the Prānāyāmic method of controlling thought.

A Yogi, desirous of merging his objective mind into the subjective, knowing that these processes of austerity and sacrifice are for the awakening in the subjective mind the consciousness of the Lord and Lover of men, gains the peace he desires.

He who performs these actions as the duty which comes to him from his past impressions, without caring for the fruits of action, gets rid of the impressions just as effectually as a (Karma) Yogi who translates these liberated impressions into actions.

One cannot be a Sannyāsin as well as a Yogi unless the subjective consciousness is awakened

by bringing the fire—Kundalini—under conscious control by the practices mentioned above. (See "The Mysterious Kundalini" by the author.)

Śri Krishna, after this explanation of renunciation and action, says, "That which is called Sannyāsa is known to be as Yoga", but to be a Yogi one must have determination (Sankalpa).

CHAPTER X

The training of the objective consciousness (Abhyāsa-dhyāna-yoga)

GĪTĀ CHAPTER VI

In the first five chapters we have been told the theory of the working of the two aspects of the mind in order to realise the eternal Peace. In the succeeding chapters we shall learn how this theory is to be put into practice. The first essential step towards this practice is to control the mind, or rather the creative activity of the mind, which manifests itself in the objective consciousness as thought. Only those who have tried to do this can understand what a difficult task it is.

The uncontrolled mind is excited by every object of sense, it passes quickly from one object to another, it is ever-changing, restless, impetuous, and hard to restrain. This fickleness is its inherent quality, and this causes its creative quality to be fickle and restless too. It is the objective consciousness which elevates or degrades us; if we direct it to the objects of sense, it keeps us bound to the wheel of births and

deaths, but if we direct it to the realisation of the divine nature of the Embodied Self, it helps us to obtain freedom from that wheel.

Arjuna, knowing how fickle that mind is, says that if Yoga is the directing of the unsteady objective consciousness towards the realisation of the divine nature of the sub-conscious, and to unify the working of the two aspects it is very difficult to attain, because the mind in its very nature is changeable, restless and as hard to restrain as the wind.

Śri Krishna agrees that this is so, but assures him that it can be controlled by practice and patience, and that Yoga can be achieved by controlling our physical and mental activities and directing the resultant energy into proper channels. The objective consciousness is not easily controlled in a place where the objects of sense are ever ready to disturb it, but it can be done in a suitable secluded place, where there are few chances of its being so disturbed. When the objective consciousness is made steady, its energy is concentrated on the eternal sub-conscious by sitting in the position of composure (Padmāsana) with body, head and neck erect and still, and looking fixedly and steadily at the point of the nose. This posture is necessary to keep the body motionless, otherwise its unchecked rest-

lessness would disturb the mind and dissipate the energy upon the surrounding objects. At first, it is difficult to fix the energy obtained by suppression of physical activity on any one point, it has a tendency to ramble among the objects of sense, but repeated efforts must be made to bring it back and fix it on one object, the Embodied Self. In this way the objective consciousness is made to prevent the manifestation of desires by restraining the organs of sense ; then being made impervious to all outside influence, it is directed to constant meditation on the sub-conscious self and its attributes till it assumes the divine nature of the sub-conscious and becomes one with it.

Sages who are engaged in this unification of the two aspects of the mind, use Karma (the energy of past impressions) as the means of achieving it, and when the union is complete (Yogārudha) a state of tranquillity is reached which makes final emancipation possible.

A man should therefore elevate his self (the objective consciousness) by his Self (the subjective); he should not annihilate the objective self, but keep it under control. The controlled self is the man's best friend, but the uncontrolled or annihilated self is his worst enemy, for the uncontrolled self becomes attached to the objects

of sense and their gratification, and so keeps a man in bondage, while the annihilated self does not allow the sub-conscious to free itself by exhausting its impressions in action.

A yogi, whose self is content with the knowledge and wisdom of the sub-conscious, who is unmoved by the vexations of the world, who has restrained his senses, to whom lumps of earth, stone or gold are equally negligible, is said to have completely merged his objective consciousness with the sub-conscious. He who looks with equal regard upon friends, foes, neutrals, foreigners, relatives, righteous and unrighteous, is even better than the former. The distinction made between these two kinds of Yogis is significant. The first is a lower grade Yogi who controls his senses and objective consciousness from without, by renunciation of the impressions from the objects of sense, but the second is a higher grade Yogi, who not only controls the impressions of the objects of sense, but also his emotions and repulsions which arise from within.

When the objective is merged in the subjective a Yogi enjoys supreme happiness which is derived from contact with the Eternal. He sees his own Self, the sub-conscious Self, in others, and others' sub-

conscious selves in him. He sees unity everywhere, and when this unity is reached, he never loses his hold on the Eternal, nor does the Eternal lose its hold on him. He is solely devoted to the sub-conscious and this devotion attracts the objective consciousness and holds it in whatever condition the Yogi may be.

The qualities of the perfect Yogi are summed up by saying, " He who judges of pleasure and pain everywhere by the same standard as he applies to himself is regarded as the highest Yogi ".

Arjuna having satisfied himself about the controlling of the mind and its creative energy by practice, is now desirous of knowing the condition of a man who is not successful in controlling his mind either by the way of knowledge or the way of action, though he makes genuine and faithful efforts to do so. Śri Krishna tells him that no efforts to reach the Eternal are lost. An impression is made by these efforts on the sub-conscious, which, though it cannot be carried into action or fulfilled in this life, will bring about the re-birth of the Embodied in a pure and blessed house, where it can carry on its efforts and reach perfection. Then when after many births perfection is attained, he reaches the supreme goal.

EXPOSITION CHAPTER X

A Yogi who has unified the two aspects of his mind is greater than an ascetic, that is one who is performing actions in order to become a Yogi. He is also greater than one who has a knowledge of the working of the mental field (Jnyāni) but does not put that knowledge into practice. He is even superior to those Karma-Yogis who do action to liberate the sub-conscious from its web of impressions.

Arjuna is therefore advised to become a Yogi, and is told that the best of all the Yogis is he who, with living faith and full desire (Shraddhā) merges his unified consciousness with the Supreme.

CHAPTER XI

Knowledge with the realisation of the sub-conscious
(Jnyāna-vijnyāna-yoga)

GĪTĀ CHAPTER VII

When the conscious mind has been trained to act perfectly upon the sub-conscious, one realises not only its divine nature, but also its infinite greatness, strength, power, grace and other attributes. The Author of the Gītā now describes this knowledge which comes from realisation (Savidnyāna) of the sub-conscious and says there is nothing greater than this that can be known.

Thousands of people are practising Yoga, but rarely does one attain perfection, rarely is one able to reach the stage of the Super-conscious. There are many reasons for this failure to attain, but Śri Krishna does not mention them. He passes on to certain facts that will help towards attainment.

Matter (Prakriti) is differentiated into many elements, some gross, some subtle. The gross or lower elements (Aparā-Prakriti) are earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind and the objective material (Buddhi) and egoism that is awareness. These

go to form the physical body. The higher subtle element (Parā-Prakriti) is the sub-conscious, which animates and sustains the whole universe. The lower and higher forms of Prakriti, which are derived from universal matter (Mula-Prakriti) are manifested in the human body and are the originators and liberators of all beings.

The inherent qualities of things, the sapidity of water, the radiance of the sun and moon, OM in the Vedas, sound in Ākāsha, virility in men, the pure fragrance of the earth, austerity in ascetics, life in beings, intellect in the intelligent, strength devoid of passion in the strong, and all desires not contrary to duty—all these are manifestations of the Universal. In fact everything abstract which is an inherent property of anything gross, is the manifestation of the sub-conscious, and through it of the Super-conscious of which it is a spark. So also are the three qualities, Sāttvic, Rājasic, and Tāmasic, with which the embodied sub-conscious is endued. Their existence is manifested only when the Ego comes into connection with the sub-conscious, that is when the sub-conscious is roused in an individual, but the Ego takes no part in their activities; when an individual is swayed by these qualities, which are embodied in a modified form in the sub-

conscious, he loses sight of the real Eternal Originator of them. This illusive envelope (Māyā) of the sub-conscious self is hard to pierce. Those only who are anxious to reach the Eternal and obtain emancipation are able to break through the web of illusion.

There are four classes of righteous people who try to reach the Eternal by impressing that desire upon the sub-conscious. The first class consists of the distressed (Ārtah) those who are tired of this world with its vicissitudes, and who constantly pray, with intensity of feeling, that God will deliver them from this weary existence; they are Mantra Yogis. The second class consists of those seekers for the knowledge (Jidnyāsu) of the embodied sub-consciousness, who are engaged in trying to practise the divine qualities which will help them to a knowledge of the sub-conscious; they are Laya Yogis. The third class are those who impress the sub-conscious with worldly objects of desire (Arthārthi), and who do the impressing with a certain faith in the power of the sub-conscious to enable them to achieve those desires; they are the Hatha Yogis. The fourth class are those Jnyānis, who have already merged the objective consciousness in the sub-conscious that they may reach the Imperishable Brahma; they are the Rāja Yogis.

All these four classes are devotees of the embodied sub-conscious according to the grade of impressions received in their past lives. They are all conscientiously striving to reach the object of their desire. But of these four classes the Jnyānis who have unified the two aspects of the mind in order to reach the Absolute are the most advanced; they have reached this realisation after many births. This awakening of the Super-conscious makes them realise that every visible and invisible thing in Nature is the product of this energy (Vasudev), which is their own innermost self.

Others again, whose consciousness is rent away from the embodied Super-conscious material become attached to other external objects of worship (Devatā) according to their qualities. The creative energy of the impressions guides their actions to the achievement of the object of their worship. The intense longing necessary for the attainment of the object is created in the individual by impressing that form or object on the sub-conscious with depth of feeling (Shraddhā). When an object is worshipped with such faith the desires of the man are fulfilled.

When the sub-conscious is impressed by external objects, the impressions will be like

those objects, and as like produces like, the objects produced in the sub-conscious will be exactly like the external objects from which the impressions proceed. The essential factor is depth of feeling, no idea or desire can enter the sub-conscious unless it is deeply felt. Every idea or desire that *is* deeply felt will enter the sub-conscious whether we desire it to do so or not. These impressions produce strong desires which in their turn excite conscious interest and a living faith in the object. When these are harmoniously blended together, the objective consciousness guides all the actions of the physical body to the achievement of that object.

The objects we gain by these external impressions are finite and perishable. They are obtained during a single life and then the original impressions are wiped out. Only men of little understanding would try to impress the sub-conscious with worldly objects of desire; far-sighted men, knowing the perishable nature of worldly objects, try to impress the sub-conscious with divine qualities, because these help them to attain to the imperishable Super-conscious.

When the creative energy of the mind is active, it does not allow the sub-conscious, which is unborn and imperishable, to manifest itself in

the conscious. The sub-conscious is veiled by illusions and is not cognized by beings moving among the pairs of opposites which spring from attraction and repulsion. The sub-conscious is aware of the previous lives of men, but it is itself unknown.

Those persons, of determined purpose, whose sins have come to an end, and who are free from the delusive pairs of opposites, direct their attention to the Embodied Self, so as to free themselves from the wheel of births and deaths. It is only such men who know the Eternal Reality (Brahma), its eternal nature (Adhyātma), and the actions it has to do (Karma). These are Karma-Sannyāsins who try to know the Brahma by the process of involution. Those also, who, with mind controlled, associate the elements (Adhibhuta), the objective consciousness (Adhidaiva), and the sacrifice of the Embodied Self (Adhiyajña), with the Superconscious even just before their death, they too obtain the Super-conscious state. These are Karma-Yogis who try to reach the Absolute by the process of evolution.

CHAPTER XII

The training of the sub-conscious in the realisation of Brahma (Akshara-brahma-yoga)

GĪTĀ CHAPTER VIII

In the previous chapters, the Author of the Gītā explained the theory, knowledge and practice of action, and of the objective and subjective aspects of the mind. These teachings had made a great impression on Arjuna, as was shown by the sensible and intelligent questions he put to his Master whenever he did not clearly understand what had been said. His mental balance, which had been disturbed by the thought of fighting with those who were his teachers, elders and relations, was becoming more steady, but in order that it might become perfectly poised Śri Krishna wished to implant these teachings more firmly in his mind, and this could only be done by showing him how to assimilate them for himself. He wanted to excite Arjuna's curiosity as to the ways in which this could be done, and had just mentioned two of those ways at the end of the seventh chapter.

Arjuna showed his desire to gain this practical knowledge by asking a number of questions :— What is the sub-conscious self (Brahma); what knowledge should we have about it (Adhyātma); what actions does it perform (Karma); what relation has it to the elements (Adhi-bhuta); what is objective consciousness (Adhi-daiva); what is the sacrifice in the body (Adhi-yajna); and how is the knower (Adhi-jnyeyam) to be known by the self-controlled at the time of death? The last question had not been suggested by what Śri Krishna had said in the preceding chapter, but arose in Arjuna's mind because he knew from the previous teaching that in the physical body there is some presiding deity that watches over and supervises all the activities of the mental and physical fields. These questions are all answered very briefly and simply in the verse :—"The Indestructible Supreme is the Eternal (the Super-conscious), its inherent nature is the knowledge of the Self, and its action is the emanation of impressions which produce thought". These three questions referred to that which is without form or qualities and is imperishable, the Nirguna Brahma, the Universal Soul of the Vedantists. The next two referred to the Brahma, with qualities, the Saguna Brahma; they are answered thus :—" The visible elements are the

perishable manifestation of the Imperishable in the form of a body. The creative energy of the body is the objective consciousness, and the supreme Brahma (Super-consciousness) is the Sub-conscious (Adhiyajña) in the body which is to be offered as a sacrifice".

In reply to the last question Śri Krishna says :—"He only, who at the time of death, casting off the body, goes forth meditating upon the Super-conscious, becomes merged into it". The self-controlled is he who has reached the stage of Savikalpa-Samādhi that is the stage in which all thought and activity in the physical body ceases for a time, but not the sub-conscious activities which keep the body alive when the conscious activity ceases. Even if a man takes a whole life-time to reach the stage of Savikalpa-Samādhi, and is only able to awake the subjective consciousness in himself just before his death, he will nevertheless enjoy the fruits of this in the life to come by being able to merge the unified mind into the Super-conscious and thus reach the stage of Nirvikalpa-Samādhi where all desires are destroyed.

Arjuna next wanted to know the fate of those who have not reached the stage of Savikalpa-Samādhi, or who are not self-controlled. The answer to this is:—"With whatever thoughts we

impress the sub-conscious at the time of death, with those same impressions the sub-conscious, the Embodied Soul, escapes from the body, attaches itself to that quality of Prakriti which resembles those impressions and is embodied again in order to realise them."

Śri Krishna now advises Arjuna, who already understands the working and the qualities of the sub-conscious aspect of the mind, to direct all his thoughts towards the sub-conscious so as to obtain inspiration for action and then to fight.

When the mind with its creative energy, the objective consciousness, is thus set on the sub-conscious, it ultimately becomes merged in it. This shows that by doing proper action one can reach the Saguna Brahma.

The way in which the preliminary difficulty of controlling and training the objective mind to realise the subjective is to be overcome, has already been explained in the sixth chapter.

Śri Krishna, after mentioning the great qualities of the sub-conscious, goes on to explain the methods necessary for training the sub-conscious mind to realise the Super-conscious :–He who, filled with reverence (for the Absolute) with a steady mind, and with the power that comes from uniting the conscious with the sub-conscious, concentrates the afferent impulses (Prānavāyu)

between the eye-brows, (that is in the Udāna-prāna, which is a subsidiary nerve centre for all incoming and outgoing impulses in the body) and meditates on the Ancient (that is the sub-conscious self which has had many births before the present One), the Omniscient (knowing the past, present and future), the Ordainer of things (regulating the actions of this life), the more minute than the minutest atom (as it is entirely invisible), the Supporter of all beings (keeping up the involuntary activity of the vital organs), the One of form unthinkable (invisible in the physical body), the Self-luminous like the Sun (unaffected by surrounding objects), and the One beyond the darkness of illusion (as it is beyond the circle of past impressions), attains to that transcendental Divine Being, the Super-conscious. This method of merging oneself into the Supreme by concentrating all the energies of the body at a point at the root of the nose is practised by the self-controlled in order to destroy all the emotions of sub-conscious origin. When the activities of the body, thought and emotions are controlled, the controlling energy is then directed to the worship of the Super-conscious (Nirguna-Upāsana) in order that it may be realised. The Yogi thus reaches what is known as the Nirguna stage, which is beyond the three

qualities (Traigunyateeta).

Another method is described for those who are doing action which is duty with the mind controlled, and who desire to reach the Nirguna Brahma. This method consists of controlling the nine gates of the body, which are concerned in producing sensations, confining the mind in the heart, concentrating all afferent impulses in the head, uttering the one-syllabled OM, and meditating on the Super-conscious. Those who dissociate themselves from the body by this process, they too, reach the supreme goal and are no more subject to re-birth in a physical body, the everchanging home of pain.

Those who think there is nothing beyond the embodied Brahma, get their objective consciousness merged in the subjective, and there being nothing for the unified consciousness to meditate upon, they return after a time to bodily form. They reach the stage of Saguna Brahma only (Saguno-pāsana). These methods are practised by Hatha Yogis, who are of two classes, one class worshipping the Nirguna form (the Universal Soul) and the other the Saguna form (the Embodied Soul).

The Hatha Yogi who worships the Nirguna form, takes one day of Brahma, which is equal to a thousand mortal years, to liberate his

subjective consciousness into realisation of the Super-conscious, that is he must wait a thousand years in the Saguna form before achieving complete freedom. The Hatha Yogi who worships the Saguna form merges his objective consciousness into the unmanifested sub-conscious for a night of Brahma, which is also equal to a thousand years, but at the beginning of the day of Brahma he returns to manifestation in a physical body.

From this we are led to infer that beyond the unmanifested in the body (Prakriti of Sāṁkhya, or Embodied Soul of the Vedāntist, or sub-conscious aspect of the mind in modern psychology) there is another unmanifest which is eternal and is not destroyed in the destruction of all beings. This is called the Unmanifested and the Imperishable (Mula-prakriti of the Sāṁkhya, Universal Soul of the Vedāntist, and Super-conscious of modern psychology). It is the goal to be reached by all, and once reached, none returns therefrom. This supreme goal is reached by intense devotion to that Unmanifested in whom all beings abide and by whom all the universe is pervaded.

The next point is "the time wherein going forth, Yogis return not, and also wherein going forth they return". These verses, the 24th and

25th of the eighth chapter, have been differently interpreted by different critics. Very learned interpretations have been given by Śankarācharya, Dr. Annie Besant, and the late Lokmanya Tilak. These interpretations may be true for they follow the traditions of the Śrutis. However I may be allowed to add an entirely different interpretation to the existing ones. The usual interpretation refers to the paths of the sun and moon in the sky. The position of the Sun determines the time of year, and the position of the moon the particular fortnights in which the souls of Yogis, when liberated from their bodies, will or will not reach the supreme goal. The souls liberated when the sun is in the Northern hemisphere, and the moon is increasing in light (the bright fortnight), reach the Eternal. Those liberated when the sun is in the Southern hemisphere and the moon is decreasing in light (the dark fortnight) do not reach the Eternal, but come back to go once more through the path of evolution and involution. The Yogi, who according to the statement made elsewhere in the Gītā, is to reach the supreme Brahma must be in the state of Nirvikalpa Samādhi, and when he is in that state he is supposed to have conquered time. Why then should he have to wait for a certain

physical period before he can liberate his soul?

To my mind the idea of a certain definite time for liberation is inconceivable. It is not length of time, nor the position of the sun or moon in the sky that makes a Yogi able to liberate his soul to join the Superconscious, the Supreme Eternal, but his conscious meditation. It may be argued in favour of the traditional interpretation that even Bhishma, when he was fatally wounded by Arjuna, waited for the sun's return to the Northern solstice for the liberation of his soul in order that he might reach Para-Brahma. It is possible however to apply the words Uttarāyana and Dakshināyana to other things than the movements of the sun, and so also the words Shukla and Krishna do not necessarily mean the phases of the moon. They may be interpreted to mean the paths in the body which a Yogi takes to reach Brahma and Para-Brahma, the conscious and unconscious paths dependent on the nervous systems of the body.

The nervous systems are of two kinds, one which is under the control of the will and is called the cerebro-spinal system and the other, the autonomic nervous system, which is not normally under our control.

The autonomic nervous system which is blackish in colour lies in front of the cerebro-spinal

system and is called the Dakshināyana path. The cerebro-spinal system is whitish in colour and is called the Uttarāyana path. Unless a conscious control over the Dakshināyana path is established, (and a Hatha-Yogi generally accomplishes this in six months by directing the energy of control on to it through the Uttarāyana path) a Yogi cannot reach the desired goal. When the physical activity is controlled, we can to a certain extent control the activity of the mind, and direct the energy of control to the realisation of the sub-conscious. This is comparatively easy to achieve, as all the visible physical activity is under our conscious control through the voluntary or cerebro-spinal nervous system; but the invisible activities, such as respiration and the beating of the heart, which keep the body alive, are unconscious, that is not under our conscious control. The suppression of the physical activity, without control of the autonomic system, wears away after a time and the individual returns to contact with the surrounding objects of sense in order to carry on his usual avocations. This is not what is desired by a Yogi who is desirous of reaching Para-Brahma. He is therefore told to control consciously the autonomic nervous system, the Dakshināyana or anterior path, so as to bring

all the involuntary actions of the body under the control of the will. This can only be done by wakening to conscious activity the dormant smouldering Kundalini, which is the foundation of the Dakshināyana path, so that its energy, the fire, can be directed towards the Sushumnā (the spinal cord) which is the basis of the Uttarāyana or posterior path, that is the cerebro-spinal system.

The dormant Kundalini is controlled by the Hatha-Yogic practices of Prānāyāma, Āsana, Bandha and Mudrā; these make the Kundalini impressionable, and direct the force of its fire along the conscious part of the nervous system. When this conscious control over Kundalini is obtained, the individual practically controls all the conscious and sub-conscious activities of the body and reaches the state of Nirvikalpa Samādhi, where he can liberate the Embodied Brahma to join the Supreme.

This is why Bhishma, who, according to his own statement was a Hatha Yogi, waited till he could direct the fire of the sun—Kundalini—to the Uttarāyana, or posterior path, in order that he might reach his goal. He could not so direct the fire immediately after his severe wound, and if he had liberated his embodied soul at once, when the fire of Kundalini was in the Dakshināyana path, he would not have been

freed from his sub-conscious activities, and would have had to come to life again to exhaust his past Karma.

This explanation of the working of Kundalini makes the interpretation of these two verses easier : A Hatha Yogi, desirous of reaching the Supreme Brahma, is able after six months' practice to direct the white flame of Kundalini along the conscious Uttarāyana path and reach the Eternal, never to return to the created world ; while a Hatha Yogi who has no definite aim allows the black smoke of the Smouldering Kundalini to go along the Dakshināyana path and in six months reaches the region of the moon, that is the moon-shaped cavity in the brain, where Udāna-Prāna, which controls the incoming and outgoing impulses is located. Having reached that he returns to his former self. A Yogi who knows these paths has no hesitation in choosing the right one by which to reach the Eternal. Śri Krishna therefore advises Arjuna at all times to be constant in the practice of Yoga, and to direct the mind, made steady by practice, towards liberation (Moksha). A Hatha Yogi who knows the Embodied Self, rises above all meritorious deeds prescribed in the Vedas, all sacrifices, all austerities, and even almsgiving and reaches the Supreme Abode.

CHAPTER XIII

The secret of realising subjective consciousness (Bramha).
(Rāja-vidyā-rāja-guyaha-yoga)

GĪTĀ CHAPTER IX

In the last chapter the control of the unconscious activities of the body was explained, but simple control of the unconscious, and the unconscious activities is not enough to enable one to reach the Supreme Brahma, it is only useful in gaining the mental and physical poise which is undisturbed by impressions whether from without or from the Embodied Self within. Emotions and memory are sub-conscious activities, they rise into conscious manifestation when stimulated by contacts with objects from without. Śri Krishna without reminding Arjuna of the original cause of his depression, led him to control his emotions which made him nervous on the battlefield, by training his sub-conscious mind. The Lord's next effort was to direct the pent-up energy arising from repressed emotions towards the realisation of that superior

force, the Super-conscious—the Impersonal Brahman, uniting with which, one is freed from rebirth. This could not be effected all at once, Arjuna had to be led to it by stages. First he was taught the philosophy of control of the objective consciousness, then the direction of the energy thus obtained to the realisation of the divine nature of the sub-conscious. Next after he had learnt how to merge the objective in the subjective, he was directed to control the sub-conscious by constant meditation. The next step is to direct the energy thus obtained to the realisation of the Super-conscious Self, the Ātman, the Embodied (Saguna) form of the Impersonal (Nirguna) Brahma. Lord Krishna now proceeds to explain the method of attaining this last stage.

The realisation of the Embodied Self—Ātman —is more difficult than that of the Universal Self. The Universal Self is known through the mind, as an external object, while the Embodied Self is not externally realised. To us, our own self is more real than the Universal Self, as it is the very foundation on which the whole fabric of our experience is based. The Author of the Gītā rightly calls it the most profound secret, that which when it is known, brings liberation. Men without faith in this knowledge do not reach the

Super-conscious, but return to the path of re-birth. It is the highest science and the greatest mystery; it is also the best means of obtaining sanctification. It is realisable by direct perception, it is endowed with merit, it is easy to practise, it is imperishable.

All this world, Śri Krishna says, is pervaded by the unmanifested Super-conscious; all entities rest in That, but That is not in them, nor do all beings rest in That, such is the power of the Divine Super-conscious. It supports all beings through the sub-conscious, and produces all beings by joining with Prakriti, and yet it does not dwell in them. This paradoxical statement that all beings live in the Super-conscious and yet do not live in That, can be explained in the following way:—As the Super-conscious pervades the whole universe, it encircles all animate and inanimate things; but though it pervades all things, it does not produce them—they are produced by Prakriti, through the agency of the Super-conscious. Thus though it is the cause of all things it does not produce them out of itself, and they do not dwell in it. The Super-conscious pervades all, just as air pervades space. At the end of a period of activity, Kalpa, all beings are merged in the Prakriti from which they were emanated; and at the beginning of a period, the

Super-conscious animates its own divine nature, Prakriti, to send out into the world again a whole multitude of beings, who are helplessly under the control of the impressions received in their past lives (Prakriter-Vashāt). The activities of beings in any life, which are the result of their past impressions, do not bind the Super-conscious, as they do not proceed from it. It, therefore, is entirely unconcerned with their activities. Nature (Prakriti) gives birth to all movable and immovable things, but it is the Unknowable Super-conscious which acts as a supervisor, and thereby causes the whole world to revolve. This explains the relation between the Super-conscious and Universal Nature.

Deluded people, with vain hopes, vain acts, vain knowledge, whose minds are deluded by the objects of sense, and who, as a result of past acts are Rājasically or Tāmasically disposed, are led into error by this demoniacal nature; not knowing that Super-consciousness is the cause of all beings, they cannot distinguish its existence when by the force of creation it is embodied in human form. These deluded people are called vain because they think that all mental and physical activities are created by the physical self. It is only the spiritually minded people, who are inclined towards the divine qualities in Nature,

who know that the Embodied Super-conscious is the inexhaustible cause of all desired objects, and who worship it with unwavering mind.

The Author of the Gîtā points out the methods to be used for the realisation of the Ātman, after the objective consciousness has been trained by the physical processes of Prānāyāma, and Āsana as explained in the sixth chapter. Three ways are suggested, for individuals of different evolutionary attainments. One is the process of merging the objective consciousness into the sub-conscious so as to imbibe its divine qualities by the absolute control of the mind (Laya Yoga). The second is by continually glorifying the Embodied Super-conscious by suitable incantations, combined with a firm resolve to merge the objective consciousness into the subjective (Mantra Yoga). The third method is by sacrificing all knowledge of the external world and so making the sub-conscious unimpressionable. This is achieved in two ways—by unifying (Ekatwena) the objective with the subjective by control of the organs of sense and action, the metaphysical method (Sāṁkhya Yoga)—or by keeping the sub-conscious apart (Prithaktwena) from the influence of the surrounding objects of sense by direct control of the mind (Dhyāna Yoga). This is the Hatha

Yogic method. In Laya Yoga it is the faith in the working of the sub-conscious; in Mantra Yoga, the determination to reach the sub-conscious; and in Hatha Yoga the non-impressing of the sub-conscious that becomes the means of the realisation of the sub-conscious. Those who know any of these three methods (Trayi-vidyā) of realisation of the Ātman, having purified the mind, centre all the conscious and sub-conscious activities of the body at a point that is bathed in the cerebro-spinal fluid (Soma) secreted by the moon-shaped ventricles of the brain—or in the language of Yoga, they carry their soul to Brahma-randhra as a preliminary to its liberation; there they enjoy for a time celestial pleasures, and when their merit is exhausted they return to the material world. The inference is that by these ways one can only reach the stage of Savikalpa Samādhi, as the aim of these who practise them is to reach only the Embodied Self and not the Self beyond. They practise them with a desire or motive, and as soon as that has been fulfilled, they return to their mortal existence. All these are worshippers of Saguna Brahma, and they are not liberated from rebirth.

Those who worship their Embodied Self, not as a separate entity, but as part of the Super-

conscious (Nirguna Brahma) in every being, attain their liberation, if not in this life, in the lives to come. Even those who take their divine inspiration from the Embodied Self of others, with full faith in their powers (as Arjuna was taking his from Śri Krishna), they too reach the Super-conscious though by a wrong method, not knowing that they have the same Embodied Self as the other. In this way Śri Krishna tries to teach Arjuna that he has an Embodied Self in him, but that the objective consciousness has broken the connection with it by attaching too much importance to the objects of sense. It is the sub-conscious self that liberates all actions and enjoys their fruits, but not knowing that this self is a part of the Super-conscious, men worship the sub-conscious as the final entity to be reached and thus fall back into the mortal world. The worshippers of the external objects of sense (Bhuta) realise those objects, that is they gain the objects of desire by impressing the sub-conscious with them; worshippers of the Ancient Self (Pitri) obtain the realisation of Self (the sub-conscious); the votaries of the organs of sense (Devatā) get the satisfaction of their senses; but the worshippers of the Super-conscious become merged in it. The simple worship of these different objects

will not enable us to attain them, there must be deep feeling (Bhāva), or strong desires (Shraddhā), or determination (Chetah) or a living faith (Bhakti)—with these only we receive what we continue to expect. The more faith we have in our ultimate realisation and attainment of that which has qualities of superiority and worth, the more surely we implant in our sub-conscious, those mental seeds that can and will bring us the greater good that we desire. The Lord, therefore, advises Arjuna to think always of the Ātman in all his actions, whether eating, offering gifts, giving alms, or performing penance. This constant thinking of the sub-conscious self as the creator in the midst of our activities, controls our objective consciousness and directs our mind to the realisation of the sub-conscious self and its qualities and not to the result of action, and so we are freed from the bonds of action. When the objective is thus merged in the subjective by the renunciation of its past impressions, it is freed to join its like, the Super-conscious.

The sub-conscious self is the same in everyone. It is not partial in its embodiment, but it is only in those who worship with faith that there is mutual intermingling of the Super and Sub-conscious selves. Even the most

sinful, if with undivided heart he directs the creative energy of the mind towards the realisation of the Super-conscious, should be considered righteous, for his resolve is right. He may not succeed immediately in its realisation, but after a few lives of constant devotion to his sub-conscious self, he will obtain everlasting tranquillity, his efforts to reach the Super-conscious cannot be wasted. Those who are determined to reach the Super-conscious state, taking refuge in their own Embodied Self, they tread the highest path even if they are women of lust (Pāpayonayah-striyah, *i. e.*, prostitutes) or those born to carry on action for the upkeep of the physical body (Vaishyas), or those living among the objects of sense (Shudras); what then need be said of those whose minds are spiritually directed (Brāhmins) or of those who live amid the splendours of the objects of sense without being attached to them (Rājarshis)? So Śri Krishna now exhorts Arjuna to direct his mind, not towards the realisation of this transient unhappy world, but to the realisation of the Embodied Super-conscious Self, which is full of bliss.

In the four verses 16 to 19 are enumerated all the abstract functions with which the sub-conscious self is associated. It is the power

(Kratu), the will (Swadhā) that sacrifices and liberates all impressions (Yajnya); it is the creeper (Aushadhi), that is, the autonomic nervous system; it is the power of speech (Mantra); it is the one to whom the oblation (Ājyam) of impressions of the present life is offered; it is the fire, the power of the Kundalini, in the body; and it is the sub-conscious self that is to be offered as a sacrifice (Hutam) in order to obtain full emancipation; it is the generator and sustainer of the bodily universe (Jagat); it is the object to be known; it is the means of sanctification; in it resides the power of command, intuition (Om-kāra), the splendour (Rik), the conciliation (Sāma), and also the rejoicing (Yajur); it is fate (Gati), the creator (Bhartā), the Lord (Prabhu) and the witness (Sākshi); it is the welcome abode of shelter; it is the sub-stratum from which arise all our actions and in which they disappear; it is the imperishable storehouse (Nidhāna) of the seeds of impressions; it is the source of the heat of the body; it regulates the rain (*i.e.* the secretions of the body); it prolongs and destroys life; it is being and non-being and though it is in the body its presence is not felt.

The whole of the teaching about the

realisation of the Ātman, the Embodied Self, is summed up in the last verse of this chapter " Direct the mind towards the sub-conscious self, with full faith, sacrifice all impressions from outside, obey it in the performance of actions. Having thus harmonised oneself with the sub-conscious with the desire of reaching the Super-conscious, one reaches the Supreme Goal".

CHAPTER XIV

Realisation of the subjective consciousness (Brâhma-jnyāna yoga)

GÎTĀ CHAPTER X

The Author of Gîtā, having described the various processes of impressing and meditating upon the sub-conscious now explains the origin of it, so that the knowledge may help Arjuna in his practical exercises.

The origin of the primal being—the Super-conscious, is Unknowable, even to the Gods and Rishis who are supposed to have reached the state of bliss; for though they are all the product of the Unknowable, it might be assumed by analogy that the Unknowable too had a creator. Śri Krishna removes the doubt by saying: "He who knows it to be unborn, without beginning, the Supreme Lord of the World, is liberated from all sin". All the various mental and physical characteristics which are seen in men:— intelligence, knowledge, freedom from delusion, forgiveness, truth, self-restraint, calmness, pleasure, pain, existence and non-existence, fear, courage, harmlessness, equanimity, content,

austerity, almsgiving, fame and disgrace, all come from the nature of the Super-conscious. The seven Great Rishis, the Ancient Four, and also the Manus were born of the Super-conscious by the creative force of its mind and from them all the world is generated. He who knows in reality the manifold emanations of the Super-conscious, and its power of creating them, will undoubtedly become attached to it because of his unswerving devotion. Having once understood that the Super-conscious is the originator of everything, and that all things are evolved out of it, wise men adore it with full devotion and determine to reach it.

Who are the seven Rishis, four Ancients and the Manus (said to be fourteen) that are said to be concerned in the creation of the various characteristics of men and things?

A reference to the seven Rishis and the Ancient Four is found in the Brihat-aranyakopanishad. If we add them all together, there are twenty-five, and they are probably identical with the principal Tatwās into which the philosophy of Kapila divides the Universe. The Ancient Four, who have previous germinal existence before the birth of the physical body and who form a part of every being in his fœtal life, are eternal in their existence. Their desire to

watch and know the human race makes them undergo continuous rebirths. Two of them are located in the mental field, and the other two in the physical field. The two that come into the mental field are the sub-conscious self (Kshetrajñya) and the sub-conscious material (Parā-prakriti) with the divine qualities. The two in the physical body are the impulses (Vāyu) flowing along the nerves of the body, and space (Ākāsha) which is embodied. These germinal parts, which are latent in the fœtal body are excited to activity by the Cosmic Energy (Bramhan) which comes in contact with the body after its birth in the physical world.

The excitation of the sub-conscious by the Cosmic Energy makes it unite with the sub-conscious material and results in the manifestation of Prāna which makes up the mental field. This Prāna establishes its relation with the outside world and brings into existence Egoism (Aham-kāra), objective material (Buddhi), and the mind (Manas), that is, a portion of the Aparā-prakriti, as well as the seven Rishis who carry on the inspired functions of hearing, seeing, smelling and taste. These seven Rishis are the two openings of the eyes, two of the ears, two of the nostrils and one of the mouth. Without Prāna they remain inactive and are not able to

carry on impressions to the sub-conscious self. In the physical field, the two of the gross elements (Mahābhūtas) which are embodied as germinal seeds (Vāyu and Ākāsha) are stimulated to activity by the Cosmic Energy to bring to life the remaining three gross elements, Prithivi, Āpas and Tejas, that is the remaining half of the Aparā-Prakriti.

The working of the six gross manifestations of Prāna—Aham-kāra, buddhi, and the mind, of the mental field, and prithivi, Āpas and Tejas of the physical field—is regulated by the sub-conscious self, according to the impressions it receives in the present life or has received in the past, through the organs of knowledge (Rishis). The realisation of that working is gained through the five organs of action and the sense of touch. The Manus, who are said to be the legislators of the race, should then be taken to mean the Karma of an individual, together with Prāna, Ahamkāra, Buddhi, the mind, Prithivi, Apas, Tejas, the five organs of action and the sense of touch. The combination of these fourteen regulates the working of the body which is brought to life by the creative energy of the universal Soul entering the body as the chief impulse (Prāna-Vāyu).

Those who direct all their thoughts and

energies to meditation on the Embodied Self, liberate both their physical body and Embodied Self eternally. They, becoming united to the embodied Super-conscious, obtain the power of intuition (Buddhi-Yoga) and perform good actions which tend to liberation. Ignorance of the Embodied Self, born of living in too great attachment to the objects of sense, is destroyed by this knowledge of its origin.

When this knowledge of the origin, working, qualities and functions of the Embodied Self had been imparted to Arjuna, he was perfectly satisfied with the teachings of his Master. Up to this time he had regarded the Lord Krishna in his human form as a friend and equal and so had not been inclined to attach any great importance to his metaphysical teachings. We also are often inclined not to put much reliance on advice given to us by our equals or inferiors, but when that same advice is given to us by our superiors in knowledge and intelligence we listen to it and believe in it. So Arjuna when he became aware of his Embodied Self through his Master's teaching, was immediately convinced that that Master was no ordinary being and, recognising his superiority, he ascribes to him all the terms of which he has just learned the significance.

"You are the Supreme Eternal (Brahma), you are the abode to be reached by men, you are the holiest of the holy, you are the Eternal Divine Being (Purusha), the primeval deity (the Super-conscious) the unborn, the Lord. These are the forms in which Rishis and Divine Rishis have acclaimed you, and now I hear about them from you".

Arjuna had so far had doubts as to the all-pervasiveness of his Master, the personified Super-conscious, but he now knows this to be true, for his manifestations cannot be comprehended by the objects of sense (Dānava) or by the organs of sense (Deva). He is now anxious to know the various manifestations of the Super-conscious which pervade the whole universe, how the Super-conscious is to be recognised by constant meditation, and in what direction its manifestations should be looked for. He also wishes to hear again all about the power and glory of the Super-conscious, although this had already been told, for, he says, he is never tired of listening to such life-giving words.

CHAPTER XV

The emanations of the super-conscious state (Vibhūti-yoga)

GĪTĀ CHAPTER X (*Continued*)

Arjuna has by now unified the two aspects of his mind and is anxious to know more of the Super-conscious State. He wishes to know to what emanations of the Super-conscious he should direct his unified self in order that it might become merged into it. These emanations are innumerable, it is not possible to meditate on all of them at once, so he asks on what special form of emanation he should concentrate his energy that he might achieve liberation.

Śri Krishna was satisfied with the progress his disciple had made in the mental field and expressed his joy at the effect of his teachings by the word "Hanta". He then begins to enumerate his various emanations in all manifested and unmanifested forms:—the Embodied Self (Ātma) in beings, Vishnu among divinities (Aditya), Marichi among winds (Marut), the Moon among asteroids (Nakshatra), Sāma-veda among Vedas, Indra among Gods (Deva), the mind among

senses, consciousness (Chetanā) in beings, Śaṅkar among the celestial beings, Lord of Wealth among demons of riches (Yaksha-Rākshasa), Pāvaka among fires, Meru of high mountains, Brihaspati among priests, Skanda among generals, the Ocean among Lakes, Bhrigu among Rishis, the one-syllable OM in speech, the Himalayas among mountains, Kapila among perfected Munis, Aśvattha among trees, monarch among men, Uchchaishravas among horses, Airāvata among elephants, the Thunderbolt among weapons, Kāmadhuk among cows, Kandarpa among progenitors, Vāsuki among serpents, the Science of Self among sciences, and the Orator among speakers. These and many other emanations of the Super-conscious are given in verses 19 to 40 of the tenth chapter; they are so many that it is impossible to enumerate them all, but the few that are mentioned are illustrative of its divine glory. They are all summed up in the sentence: whatever is glorious, good, beautiful and awe-inspiring in nature and being, comes forth from a fragment of the splendour of the Super-conscious that is embodied in them. Another way of expressing it, is that whatever thrills and stirs us to our very soul, our sub-consciousness, is an emanation of the Super-conscious, which awakens our subjective consciousness and produces the

sensations, delightful or otherwise, that we are experiencing.

When we know what subjective consciousness is, and remember the sensations we have had, we can transfer the mind to the field of the finer forces at will. The process by which this is done has been described in the chapters dealing with the metaphysical (Sāṁkhya) and psychic (Yoga) methods of training the mind.

In the metaphysical method a knowledge of the working of the mental field is essential in order to excite the subjective consciousness by direct impressions from outside. The other method is a study of the different planes of vibration, with a view to gaining a perfect understanding of the knowledge of each plane. The control of physical action takes the mind away from the lowest plane of vibration, the organs of sense, to the plane of objective vibrations, where it is made steady by determination. When that plane is fully mastered, the mind, by faith, is carried to the higher plane of subjective vibrations where it absorbs the divine qualities and understands the working of the subjective consciousness.

The consciousness of this plane excites the finer forces of the body which help to control one's sub-conscious activities and to achieve and

feel all that is best or worst in the nature, Sāttvic, Rājasic or Tāmasic, which is attached to the Embodied Super-consciousness. The individual then becomes an emanation (Vibhūti) of the highest plane of the Super-conscious. When this stage is reached, the mind, liberated from attachment, is carried to the highest plane of vibrations, which is ethereal and above the finer physical forces of the body; here it gains by intense devotion, the supreme goal (Moksha).

This is the path which Śri Krishna advises his disciple to follow. It is the path of involution where the gross is made to merge into the subtle. This process runs all through the teachings of the Gîtā. First the effects or visible manifestations are described, then the process of controlling those manifestations, and then the knowledge of what caused those effects to be manifested. When the knowledge of the cause has been brought to the consciousness, it establishes a control over the creative power of the mind and brings the finer consciousness to the front. Control of the sub-conscious aspect excites subjective consciousness which is liberated to join the Super-conscious, by virtue of conscious interest in its realisation.

It is precisely this teaching of the Gîtā that is taken advantage of in Western New Thought

literature, which aims at making an individual the creature of his desires, whether good or bad. Knowing that the all-pervading limitless Super-consciousness is embodied as the sub-conscious, but not believing in its divine nature, the creative image of the mind, with the image of the object desired, is projected on the sub-conscious with great intensity of feeling. This rouses the dormant subjective consciousness to activity, which in due course regulates the physical activity towards the achievement of the object desired. This is a process of evolution without any control of the mind, and binds a man to results, and so by this method, according to the teachings of the Gîtā, there cannot be that liberation of the Embodied which prevents re-birth.

In the process of involution for reaching Moksha, because the mind is controlled, there is no impressing of the sub-conscious so as to create new Karma. The Kriyamāna Karma (impressing to produce action) is stopped. By merging the objective into the subjective no new Karma (Sanchit) is given effect to, only the fully ripened Karma, the accumulated Karma of past lives, for the exhausting of which the Yogi comes into this world, is liberated to action, and when that is done, he is free from rebirth.

The force of the sub-conscious within us is such that if we arouse it to consciousness in the right way, we achieve what the teachings of the Gîtā are given to help us to achieve—liberation from rebirth, the home of pain and misery. Śri Krishna therefore rightly says to Arjuna, "What is knowledge of these details of my emanations to you? Worship that fragment of me in the form of the sub-conscious self with which I pervade this (bodily) universe," and so answers his disciple's question "In what aspect should I worship you to reach liberation (Moksha)."

CHAPTER XVI

The vision of the Super-conscious
(*Vishva-rūpa-darśana-yoga*)

GĪTĀ CHAPTER XI

Arjuna has by now learnt from his Master everything that ought to be known about the mental states, and has put it into practice. The war between the two personified consciousnesses is almost at an end, and Śri Krishna, the personified Super-conscious, has, by analysis, reasoning and argument established his authority over Arjuna the personified objective consciousness, for Arjuna states that his delusion has disappeared. He now wishes to see what has produced this change, to see and experience the Super-conscious state as it is seen by those who have freed themselves from worldly trammels and obtained Moksha. His desire to realise the Self which is unknown to the senses, to reason or to memory had been satisfied by the simile of still and moving air existing in space, which had been given by the Lord (IX.6).

Arjuna had learnt from Śri Krishna about the production and dissolution of things, and about

his own inexhaustible greatness, and although he believed what he had heard, still he was not quite sure about the Super-conscious being the Creator of the Universe, so he asked:—"O Supreme Lord, I desire to see Thine Omnipotent form, even as Thou hast described Thyself to me, as the greatest of all beings. If Thou thinkest me to be capable of seeing it, O Lord of Yogis, show me Thy imperishable form."

Śri Krishna knew what was in Arjuna's mind, and understood that if his desire to see the Super-conscious form was not granted, he would always have a lingering doubt about his great creative power, and would lose faith in all that had been said to compose his mind. So having the welfare of his disciple at heart, the Lord agreed to show him his eternal form and so remove all his doubts and impress the truths already taught so firmly on his mind that there should be no more delusion. He therefore told Arjuna that he should see his hundreds and thousands of celestial forms of all shapes and colours, and many more marvels, which no one had seen before. He told him to notice especially the shining mass of splendour formed by the twelve suns (Ādityas), and the speed with which it is revolving, (I think the word "Maruta" here implies the quality of speed), the various vital

airs (Vasus) and fires of destruction (Rudras), that are produced from it, as well as the day and night of Brahma (Asvinau) that is the beginning and end of the universe.

Arjuna wishes to know when and how he is to see all this and is told to see it in Śri Krishna's body; there he should see the whole universe with all its movable and immovable objects, and everything else that he desired to see. But as he could not see it with his mortal eyes, Śri Krishna gave him for the time the gift of Super-conscious sight (Divyachakshu) by lifting him to that state of accomplishment (Siddhi) which opens the divine vision to see the form Omnipotent.

Then follows a vivid description of the Super-conscious state and what Arjuna saw there—A form all wonderful, resplendent, all-pervading, with many mouths and eyes, with many divine ornaments, with celestial weapons uplifted, wearing the celestial necklace and vestures, anointed with celestial unguents. The splendour of the form could only be compared to the lustre of a thousand suns rising in the sky all at once. There in the body of this form, Arjuna saw the whole universe at once with its manifold divisions. He was overwhelmed with wonder at the sight, and with hair upstanding, he bowed before the Lord with joined palms, and described what he saw.

He saw all the Gods and other groups of divine beings; he saw Brahmā, the embodied form of the Super-conscious, seated upon the lotus throne; he saw all the Rishis, that is the embodied beings who help humanity to draw near to the Super-conscious, and all the serpents, that is the objects of sense that draw men to the lower world. He saw a divine form possessed of many arms, stomachs, mouths and eyes on all sides, but he could not see any beginning, middle or end to it. He saw this form, with coronet, mace and discus, like a brilliant mass of light, difficult to look at, blazing on all sides with the effulgence of the sun.

Having seen this awe-inspiring form Arjuna worshipped it saying:—"Thou art the Imperishable, the Supreme, the great Supporter of the Universe, Thou art the undying Guardian of the Imperishable Dharma, the embodied Brahma, and I believe Thee to be Eternal. (Dharma here should be taken to mean that which remains after the body perishes, that is the sub-conscious). I see Thee without beginning, middle or end, infinite in power, of manifold arms, having the sun and the moon for eyes, and blazing fire for mouth, burning up the universe with Thy splendour. By Thee alone are filled the heavens, the earth and the space between them. Beholding

thus Thy marvellous and awful form, O possessor of the mighty body, the three worlds are trembling with fear. Lo! these groups of beings having divine qualities are merging into Thee tremblingly, with joined palms, while the groups of sages, those Jnyānis who have merged themselves into the sub-conscious state, as well as the Siddhās, who have obtained entrance into that state by Yoga practices, are satisfied with the result of their effort, and worship Thee with hymns of praise. All these beings in various grades of mental development, whose desires are not fully controlled, who are on a level with Rudras, Ādityas, Vasus and others, who are making an effort to merge themselves into their embodied Super-conscious, are gazing at Thee with amazement. Beholding Thy mighty form, with many mouths and eyes, O mighty-armed one, with many arms, thighs and feet, with many fearful jaws, the worlds quake and so do I ".

When he saw this terrible awe-inspiring form with fearful jaws flaming with the fires of destruction, Arjuna's innermost soul began to quake, he had no courage left in him, and his comfort was destroyed. He therefore cried for mercy to the Refuge of all Worlds. His fear was increased when he saw in the body of this form, the sons of Dhritarāshtra, together with a multitude of

kings, Bhishma, Drona, the son of the charioteer, and the warriors on his side all rushing into that awful mouth. He saw the blazing mouth licking, crushing and swallowing these warriors. He was amazed at the sight and wondered whether this could be the same person who created and sustained the Universe, or whether it was some other who destroyed it. He asked, "Who art Thou in this fierce form? I salute Thee, have mercy on me, for I do not understand this aspect of Thine. I desire to understand it, O Primeval One".

Śri Krishna answered :—"I am death, the destroyer of the world, fully manifest and active here to destroy all these people. None of these warriors here assembled to fight will escape death but you." The Lord thus assures Arjuna of his victory and so removes the doubt that had been one of the causes of his depression, and exhorts him to fight and obtain glory and enjoy a prosperous kingdom by vanquishing his foes. He assures Arjuna that his enemies have already been killed in the invisible Super-conscious state, and now he must fight fearlessly and crush his rivals on the field of battle and be the outward physical cause of their destruction.

Having heard these words, Arjuna prostrated himself with folded arms at the feet of his Master.

So far the luminous (Āditya) and destructive (Rudra) aspects of the Super-conscious have been described. Arjuna now describes what he sees of the preservative aspect. "To Thy preservative care (Sthāne), O Lord of Sense, the universe is entrusted, and rejoices in Thy praise; the Rākshasas (men under the control of their organs of sense) fly terror-stricken in all directions; all the hosts of Siddhas (men who have controlled their objective consciousness) bow down to Thee. And why should they not, O high-souled One? for Thou art greater than Brahmā, the primal cause, O Lord of Gods! Thou art the imperishable Sat (sub-conscious state), the perishable Asat (conscious state), as well as That (Tat) Supreme (Super-conscious state), which is beyond them. Thou art the primal cause, the ancient Being (Ātman) in men. Thou art the Supreme Refuge. Thou art the Knower, the object to be known, and the supreme goal to be reached. O Infinite Form! by Thee the Universe is pervaded. Thou art the Vāyu (Vitaliser), Yama (destroyer), Agni (Kundalini), Varuna (divine fluid), the Moon (moon-shaped cavity in the brain), Prajāpati (subsidiary nerve centre in the brain known as Thalamus), and Prapitāmaha (the great-grandfather, *i.e.* the brain). Hail, hail to Thee, a thousand times, all hail." The words Vayu,

Yama, Agni, Varuna and the Moon all have reference to the Kundalini, which is under the influence of the sub-conscious mind, and whose working is involuntary.

When this primeval form of his personified Master was seen by Arjuna, he was sorry that he had unknowingly called him "Krishna," "Yādava," "friend," carelessly and ignorantly, not knowing his greatness, and asks to be forgiven for any disrespect he may have shown him while walking, resting, sitting or at meals, when alone or with others. He now recognises him to be the father of the world and all movable and immovable things, far greater than the great, having no equal in all the worlds. He was amazed at what he saw, but also he was afraid and asked Śri Krishna to show himself again in his usual form.

This primeval form was shown by Śri Krishna by virtue of his own mysterious powers. Arjuna could not see it of himself, as he had not yet reached the state of liberation, none of the Yogis who had gone before had seen it, nor would any who came after. Śri Krishna then re-assumed his usual form.

The realisation of the Super-conscious state is not attainable by renunciation of action (Yajnya), or by the acquisition of knowledge of the Vedas (Jnyāna), or by performance of action (Kriyā), or

by severe austerities (Tapas) as practised by the Hatha-Yogis, or by making the gift of the fruits of action (Dāna). Śri Krishna says : "I cannot be seen as you have seen me by means of the knowledge of the Vedas, nor by penance, nor by gifts, nor yet by sacrifice, but by intense devotion to me alone, can I be truly known and assimilated."

He who performs action for propitiating the Super-conscious, he who has That for his God, who is devoted to That and has no enmity towards any, he alone is liberated.

Just as Śri Krishna had prescribed Chetas as the means by which the objective consciousness could be reached, and Shraddhā as the means for reaching the subjective, so now he prescribes Bhakti for reaching the Super-conscious.

CHAPTER XVII

The ways of realising the Super-conscious (Bhakti-yoga)

GÎTĀ CHAPTER XII

In Chapters VIII, IX and X of the Gîtā, the Author showed us the ways by which the sub-conscious state could be reached as a preparation for becoming merged into the Super-conscious, while in the last verses of the eleventh chapter, he shows that the Super-conscious can be reached without being merged in the sub-conscious, but only by the path of devotion.

The question then arises: Which is the better Yoga, to merge oneself directly into the Super-conscious, or indirectly through the sub-conscious?

The surest way is by devotion (Bhakti-Mārga), though the Super-conscious can be reached in other ways, for instance by intense desire (Shraddhā). If the striver approaches the sub-conscious with a desire for worldly objects, he is hurled back again into the world to get his desires satisfied. The question refers only to those devotees whose only desire is liberation,

and Arjuna desires to know which class of these is the better versed in Yoga.

He is told that those who are ever trying to merge their objective consciousness in the subjective, by directing the mind towards the Embodied Self, with a strong desire to reach the Super-conscious are the best. Those who, subduing all senses, regarding everything equally, rejoicing in the welfare of all, try to reach the Super-conscious state, get their 'selves' only merged into it; their sub-conscious activities go on uncontrolled, as no effort is made to reach the sub-conscious so as to excite the subjective consciousness which controls these activities.

Two ways are suggested for reaching the Super-conscious state. One is through indirect control of the mind by knowledge of its working, and the other, through the direct control of the mind by controlling the organs of sense and the activity of the physical body. The first method is difficult to practise owing to the fluidity of the mind mentioned by Arjuna in chapter six. It is therefore hard for the physical self to reach the highest state, the Nirguna form, Bramha. This path is possible for the Jnyāna Yogis, they pass over the Embodied to reach the Unmanifested Supreme, and give scope to the

Embodied to liberate its past impressions (Sanchita Karma) as this activity is not checked by merging the objective consciousness in the Subjective. Such an individual has to seek his own redemption by exhausting his past Karma; though living in a physical form, he is not attached to it, he is what is called Jivan-mukta, liberated, though still living. He reaches the Super-conscious state direct.

The second process is a gradual one, it carries an individual by graded steps to the Unmanifested Super-conscious state, by controlling the mind and restraining the organs of sense. The controlled mind, with its creative energy the objective consciousness, is then directed with intense desire (Shraddhā) towards the sub-conscious, the Embodied Self, and merged into it. This merging puts an end to all new Karma (Kriyamāna), and destroys the manifestations of all past Karmas (Sanchit and Prārabdha). When the Embodied is thus free from all impressions, past and present, it is directed by devotion towards the realisation of the Super-conscious and is liberated from re-birth. Of these two Yogis, one starts to reach the goal by the shorter but more difficult route, while the other reaches the same goal by a longer but easier one. The first

route is by the mental field, the second through the physical.

Śri Krishna advises his disciple to follow the easier path, so that he may with certainty become permanently merged into the sub-conscious, and through that into the Super-conscious. In view of the difficulty of keeping the mind steady and directed to one point, he is told to repeat the attempt again and again, by repeatedly abstracting it from the objects of sense, as suggested in the Hatha-Yogic practices mentioned in the eighth chapter. If he is not able to carry on these practices, he should at least propitiate the Embodied Self by singing or hearing of its divine qualities, and so attaining perfection by Mantra-Yoga. If one is unable to worship the personal God, the Embodied Self, even by these means, he should at least renounce all fruits of action by controlling the self, and taking refuge in the divine qualities. The knowledge of these qualities is better than blind practice, meditation is better than knowledge, and better than meditation is the renunciation of the fruits of action, for this leads immediately to the Eternal Peace.

Methods of reaching the Impersonal (Nirguna) Brahma have now been suggested for men of every grade of mental development, but stress is

laid upon the merit of renunciation, because for men who are busy with worldly existence it is not possible to practise the other methods of reaching the Supreme Eternal. Therefore, all people who have to work in the world should practise this renunciation of the fruit of actions which they are bound by their daily avocations to perform. This Karma-phala-tyāga annihilates desires and helps the Embodied Self to exhaust its past impressions, especially the Prārabdha portion, *i.e.* that portion of the past impressions which is ready for manifestation in the present life. The lack of desire prevents the impression of the sub-conscious with the objects of desire, and no new Karma is created for future manifestation. The men of this world, with this Phala-tyāga are liberated from rebirths after the exhaustion of the Sanchit Karma.

In the next few verses the Author describes the behaviour one should adopt towards himself and others so as to achieve this renunciation of the fruits of action. He should bear no ill-will to anyone, he should be friendly and compassionate to all, he should be without attachment or egoism, balanced in pleasure and pain, forgiving, content, desirous of reaching the Embodied Self, self-controlled, resolute, with mind and objective consciousness directed

towards the Self. He should love and be lovable, free from anxiety, fear and anger. He should desire nothing, be pure in mind and body, prompt in checking desires, unconcerned with the objects of sense, and untroubled by their renouncement. He should not love nor hate, grieve nor desire. He should renounce all good and evil with conscious faith in the sub-conscious self, the Embodied Super-conscious. He should be alike to friends and foes, in cold and heat, in pleasure and pain, and destitute of attachment. He should take equally praise or reproach, be silent, be wholly content with what comes, be homeless, be firm in mind and full of devotion. These devotees of the Super-conscious, who regulate their actions in conformity with this wisdom, in full faith in their power of reaching the sub-conscious, ultimately reach the Supreme goal.

CHAPTER XVIII

The varied desires with which the Embodied is impressed
(*Shraddhā-traya-vibhāga*)

GĪTĀ CHAPTER XVII

The teachings of the Gîtā are based on the belief that the sub-conscious self has all the superior qualities attached to it from the beginning. The man has within himself all these qualities in a perfect state, and his advancement is promoted by trying not to impress imperfections upon his sub-conscious, but to bring out by degrees in his personality all the perfect qualities that already exist within him, and which are inherent powers of the sub-conscious self, the Ātman. In its successive embodiments, the sub-conscious gathers round itself, in addition to its original qualities others, good or bad, according to the impressions it receives during the periods of embodiment. These teachings form the basis of all the Hindu Scriptures. He who sets aside the ordinances of the Scriptures, and acts on the impressions of his desires does not attain perfection, or happiness. So Śri

Krishna advises Arjuna to take the Scriptures as the authority for determining what ought or ought not to be done. Man should work in this world according to the instructions given in the Scriptures.

Arjuna next enquires about the fate of those people who act faithfully but not in accordance with the teachings of the Scriptures, and so impress the sub-conscious, without knowing of or believing in its divine qualities.

He has already been told that without this knowledge man is not liberated from rebirth ; it follows therefore that when a man is ignorant of the divine qualities, he must continue to exist in the world of desires.

A man is by nature endowed with three kinds of ideals (Shraddhā), superior or spiritual (Sāttvic), material or worldly (Rājasic), and wayward or vicious (Tāmasic). These ideals are produced according to the impressions which the sub-conscious material has received in the past and which it receives in the present. The ideals of a man are his wants, desires and aims. A man is the creator of his ideals, and what he is to be is determined by those ideals. The destiny of every one is being created hourly by himself. The force of the past impressions on the sub-conscious material determines what he is to

create at a particular moment and not any external power or fate. Our ideals control and determine our destiny. Men with spiritual ideals impress their sub-conscious with spiritual qualities, worldly men impress theirs with the demoniacal desire for wealth and power, (Yaksha-Rakshāmsi), while the vicious impress theirs with a multitude of animate and inanimate objects indiscriminately (Pretān Bhūtaganān).

Men without a knowledge (Achetashā) of the ordinances mentioned in the Scriptures, given to egoism and ostentation, impelled by the force of desire and passion, perform severe austerities not enjoined in the Scriptures, tormenting the organs of the body, together with the Embodied Self (the activities of the sub-conscious). These austerities, practised to obtain what is contrary to the divine nature of the sub-conscious are full of evil (Asura-nischayān).

The Sāttvic, Rājasic and Tāmasic qualities of the mind are greatly influenced by the food taken, and also by sacrifice (Yajnya), by austerity or control (Tapas), and by gifts (Dāna).

Spiritually minded men take only delicious, bland, substantial and agreeable food, to augment vitality, energy, vigour, health, joy and cheerfulness. Such a diet does not stimulate the sub-conscious activity through the gustatory

nerves, which are organs of sense (Jnyãnendriyas) and does not distract the mind from the object it is seeking to achieve. Such a diet being in conformity with the divine qualities of the sub-conscious helps spiritually minded people to attain the goal earlier. They partake of wholesome food to satisfy their hunger, without making the act of eating an absorbing object of thought. They do not allow their minds to run on their food.

The passionate desire food that is bitter, sour, saltish, over hot, pungent, dry and burning, which produces pain, grief and illness. They eat, not to keep their bodies in order, but merely to satisfy their organs of sense, they eat more or less according as the quality of the food is agreeable or disagreeable to their sense organs. This diet stimulates the activity of the sub-conscious through the nerves of taste and smell, causes irregular action of the stomach and intestines, and distracts the mind, keeping it bound to the physical activity induced by pain, grief and sickness. Constant use of such food makes the sub-conscious easily impressionable by passionate feelings, which are discharged to activity through the objective mind.

The vicious or wayward, eat food that is stale, flat, putrid and corrupt, consisting of remnants,

and unclean. They take food without discrimination to satisfy the cravings of the organs of action (Karmendriyas), by doing rash, indiscriminate things. This shows that the power of perception in these people is naturally dull or accidentally blunted, or their mental faculties are untrained. They feel hunger and thirst and they appease them in a beast-like way, they have no true appreciation of or appetite for dainty food, nor of its use in moderation. All these teachings are aptly summed up in the aphorism: " Beasts feed, man eats, but only men of genius know how and what to eat ".

It is to be considered an important duty not to impress the sub-conscious though one has to live among the objects of sense, for once it is impressed, its creative energy will force the individual to go round the cycle of births and rebirths till the fruits of those impressions are realised.

Not to impress the sub-conscious is the best of sacrifices, but it is only possible to those Yogis who have merged the objective into the subjective.

The Author of the Gîtã, knowing that this sacrifice is not possible to men given to worldly pleasures, suggests that at least the impressions should be made without desire for material gain,

in this way one draws nearer to the goal of self-realisation.

Impressions made contrary to this rule, with the object of gaining fruit and self-gratification, are material and bind us to worldly objects. The impressing of the sub-conscious without method (Vidhihīnam), without creation of thought (Anna is symbolically used for thought), without deliberation (Mantrahīnam), without sincerity (Adakshinam), and without faith (Shraddhā-virahitam) is considered vicious.

In the devotional method of impressing the mind, a certain amount of mental control is necessary. The mind must first be fixed on a desired object or idea. This is easily possible to Jnyānis who understand the proper working of the mind. Those who do not understand this working try to impress the Embodied Self unconsciously by practising certain austerities of control suggested by the Lord. These are of three kinds, pertaining to the body (Kāyic), speech (Vāchic), and mind (Mānasic). These physical, vocal, and mental austerities help an individual to steady his mind unconsciously to a point and then by meditation the sub-conscious is impressed, so that it liberates its creative energy to achieve the object.

When all the physical energy is controlled by

the eight rules given by Pātanjali and by various methods of Hatha Yogic practice, it is directed towards the restraining (Pūjanam) of the impressions of the organs of sense (Deva), the mind (Dwija), the "great within" (Guru-mahat), and the Ego (Prajnyā-Ahamkāra), and also towards the observance of purity, straightforwardness, continence and harmlessness ; this is called the austerity of the body.

It is possible by indiscreet speech, to impress the sub-conscious with a bad idea. To prevent this, speech should be controlled. It should be truthful, pleasant and causing no annoyance. It should be directed towards the repetition of the divine qualities of the sub-conscious (Swādhyāyabhyasanam), as is done in Mantra-Yoga. Serenity of the mind, kindness, silence, self-control and purity of thought (Bhavasaṁ-śuddhi) is called mental austerity, and is practised in Rāja Yoga.

All these three kinds of austerity, when practised with utmost faith and without desire for fruit are said to be spiritual, but when they are practised with the object of gaining respect, honour and worship, or for ostentation, they are said to be material, unstable and transitory in their effects. The austerity which is practised out of a foolish notion, with self-torture, or for

the purpose of harming others, is said to be vicious.

By Yajnya and Tapas a man impresses his own Embodied Self. Both require a certain amount of mental and physical control. The idea underlying them is that a man can select some impressions from his surroundings, according to his nature, and reject others which are undesirable. It presupposes a strong mind that can discriminate, and then hold firmly to what is selected. Average persons are entirely under the influence of the objects that surround them and absorb impressions without discrimination. Arjuna was such a person; he had absorbed impressions with associated feelings and so had lost his mental balance on the battlefield. Such persons are weak in mind and so must be helped towards proper discrimination by gifts (Dāna in the form of right thoughts, coming from one who is able to discriminate). In such a case an outside influence acts for a time and induces the objective mind to do a discriminate action. This was done so successfully by Śri Krishna that Arjuna not only regained his discrimination, but fought the battle to a successful issue.

These gifts are in the form of right suggestions which are accepted by the weak-minded with

conviction, but without any logically adequate grounds. Yajnya and Tapas are processes of negative and positive forms of auto-suggestion. In Yajnya, the conscious mind is trained to refuse all impressions so that they may not be carried to the sub-conscious and become realities ; while Tapas makes every idea that enters the conscious mind acceptable to the sub-conscious by concentration and meditation, the idea is then transformed into reality by the sub-conscious self, and forms a permanent element in life.

When the gift of an impression is made, the objective or conscious mind is entirely ruled by the conscious mind of the impressor, which takes the place of the sub-conscious mind of the person impressed. The receiver of the suggestion then acts or behaves according to the wishes and desires of the impressor. It was the wish of Śri Krishna that Arjuna should fight on his own account in a righteous cause, and he acted in accordance with his Master's wishes.

Śri Krishna made a gift of his desires at the right time to Arjuna who thereby became fit to fight the battle. The gift of right thought, given to anyone without expectation of reward, taking into consideration the suitability of the time, the fitness of the gift, and worthiness of the

person, is said to be Sāttvic. A gift given with a view to gaining a return, or given reluctantly is said to be material, while a gift given at an improper place or time, given contemptuously or disrespectfully or to the undeserving is said to be vicious.

The Sāttvic varieties of Yajnya, Tapas and Dāna are associated with the three words—Aum Tat-Sat—which form the triple description of Brahman, the Super-conscious. In these words, Śri Krishna gives a clue to the method of realising an object. Through this method all things in Nature were created by the Absolute, and the method is now given to man that he may realise his desires. If the knowers of Brahman and the gainers of the objects of desire performed their acts of sacrifice, austerity and gift without faith in their powers, they would not bring the Reality to themselves or to others; they would not be able to excite in themselves or in others, the subjective consciousness which is necessary for reaching the Eternal, or to gain the objects of desire. There must be the power to intensify desire into a living faith if the desire is to be achieved and that power is centred in the utterance of the magic formula—Aum-Tat-Sat.

The utterance of the word 'Aum' as an

incantation (Mantra) at the beginning of every act, sets up soothing vibrations, which help to calm the mind and to create an atmosphere of holiness and consecration round it. When the mind is thus made steady, that which it is desired to realise is impressed upon it by the utterance of 'Tat.' When the object of desire is thus impressed upon the mind, it excites the subjective aspect to the consciousness of that object, and liberates that desire as a gift (Dāna) which becomes a reality 'Sat'.

Acts done without such faith and intensity of feeling are not real (Asat). They do not help one to gain the Eternal nor the specific objects of desire in this life or in the life to come. (Na-cha-pretya-no-iha).

CHAPTER XIX

Liberation of impressions to proper channels of action
(Moksha-sannyāsa-yoga)

GÎTĀ CHAPTER XVIII

So far the teachings of the Gîtā have been directed towards the relinquishment of the fruit of action. To establish the importance of this truth with regard to the realisation of the Self, and for gaining freedom from rebirth, the Author of the Gîtā now explains the origin of action, good or bad, and the theory, practice and methods of controlling it.

In the teachings of the Gîtā, the word Sannyāsa is associated with the relinquishment of the fruits of action thus taking action for granted. But Arjuna had learnt in the Smriti, that in Sannyāsa, the fourth state of life which man has to reach, after passing through all the experiences of Brahmacharya, Gārhasthya and Vānaprastha, he was supposed to break his relations with the external world by renouncing all actions arising from desire, and that it was in this stage that man was prepared [for the realis-

ation of the Self. As this teaching differed from what his Master has now taught him, he asks to be told the truth about Sannyāsa (renunciation) and Tyāga (relinquishment).

Śri Krishna explains to him the interpretations put on these two words by the wise. Those who know the working of the mental field (Jnyanis) interpret Sannyāsa as the renunciation of all actions that spring from desire, and the far-sighted men (Vichakshana) declare Tyāga to be the abandonment of the fruits of all action.

The real meaning of the word Sannyāsa is renunciation of action, the words 'without desire' are merely an addition made by the Jnyānis because it is not possible to renounce all actions while living in this world. In complete renunciation of action, both mental and physical, there is no impressing of the Embodied Self, the subconscious, with the creative energy of the mind, and so Kriyamāna (new impressions) is brought to a standstill. The renunciation of physical action, with control of the mind, prevents the manifestation of all past impressions (Sanchita Karma) and these are destroyed. Such a man is practically dead to his surroundings, he must be a Yogi in union with his own Self, with all desires burnt out. He is in that stage (Nirvikalpa) which leads one to the Super-conscious state, the ultimate

stage to be reached. Men aiming at this control of mind (Manishin) to reach the Super-conscious say that all action is evil.

The majority of men living in this world are of average mental development, and even if they control all their physical activity, or abandon it completely, the sowing of the seeds of impressions with the creative energy of the mind—thought—is always going on. If this sowing be done with energy, the seed is sure to spring up in the form of desire and to bear fruit in the gratification of desire which binds men to the objects of sense. In order that men might not remain so bound, though living in the world, far-sighted men have used the word 'Tyāga', abandonment of the fruits of action. This abandonment overpowers desire, which is an outcome of impressions on the Embodied Self, and makes that Self non-impressionable, so preventing the generation of new Karma. The man then only lives to do action which liberates those impressions from the past that are ripe for manifestation. He thus helps the Embodied Self to liberate itself from the shackles of Karma. The cause of action in this case starts from within and not from without. Action from within (Niyata-Karma) is action prescribed by destiny, and relinquishment of it, on account of delusion, is said to be Tāmasic. Such action

should not be abandoned even if it causes fear or pain, for, if it is, the individual comes more under the influence of the senses. Such relinquishment is Rājasic in nature, and the relinquisher does not obtain the usual fruit of relinquishment—the merging of the objective into the subjective. Ordained action, done because it must be done, by relinquishing attachment and fruit, is Sāttvic.

Even among those who advise Tyāga in its true sense, there are who say that spiritual devotion (Yajnya), austerities (Tapas) and gifts (Dāna) which are practised for the realisation of the Self, should not be abandoned; for these acts purify the minds of those who are trying to merge themselves into the Embodied.

An intelligent relinquisher, endowed with a knowledge of the working of the sub-conscious (Sattva-samāvishtha), with doubts dispelled, does not hate disagreeable work and is not attached to agreeable work. It is not possible for a man living in a physical body to relinquish action completely, for he has to carry out his fully ripened Karma, but he who relinquishes the fruit of actions is called a Tyāgi.

Those who do not relinquish the fruit of action naturally expect something in return for their action, and that return will be good or bad, in

the life to come according to the impressions they have made on the sub-conscious with the intention of getting a result.

Whatever action a man does, by means of his body, speech or mind is the outcome of the five causes as declared in the Sāṁkhya philosophy (a system based on the knowledge of the working of the body and the mind). These are the body (Adhisshthāna), the conscious mind as the doer (Kartā), the various organs of sense (Karana), their manifold action, and destiny (impressions of past lives). That being so, he who owing to lack of understanding looks upon his physical self as the absolute actor, does not see the real doer of the action.

"He who is free from egoism, whose conscious mind is not affected from without, but who takes his inspiration to action from within though he slays the fighters here assembled does not slay (the real fighters in them) nor is he bound by action."

Impellors and Regulators of Action
(*Karma-chodanā and karma-sangraha*)

Physical activity cannot start of itself, there must be a visible or invisible cause behind it. The causes that lead to action and that regulate it are now described. The knowledge of the

means (Jnyāna) by which the object is achieved, the thing to be known (Jnyeyam), which is the object to be gained, and the knower, the sub-conscious (Jnyātā) on which the idea is impressed—these three are the impellors of action (Karma-chodanā); they do not take any active part in the performance of it. The implement of achievement (Karan), the visible manifestation of the impression (Karma), and the conscious activity of the objective mind (Kartā), are the three regulators of action (Karma-sangraha). Jnyāna, Jnyeyam and Pari-jnyātā are terms relating to sub-conscious activity and information about them is given in the 18th verse of the thirteenth chapter. Karana, Karma and Kartā relate to conscious activity. The sub-conscious activity supplies the necessary force to the conscious to give expression to the ideas which occur there.

The classical example of the potter is given to explain these conscious and unconscious activities. The idea comes to the sub-conscious mind of the potter (Jnyātā) to create a pot (Jneyam), he then thinks of the means by which it can be done (Jnyāna); when these impressions are clearly fixed in the sub-conscious, they are transferred to the conscious mind (Kartā) which looks for the necessary instruments, clay wheel, etc., (Karana), by the help of which a pot is

produced (Karma).

From the emotional point of view it can be said that the knowledge of the impressions on the sub-conscious excites the conscious mind to regulate the physical actions to gain the result of impressions.

Of these impellors and regulators, only knowledge, action and the conscious mind are associated with the three qualities, spiritual, material and vicious, mentioned in the Sāṁkhya philosophy.

The knowledge by which one imperishable being (the sub-conscious self) is seen in all beings, inseparable in the separated, is spiritual; that which sees the sub-conscious as a separate entity in each being, is material; while the knowledge which is devoid of reason, narrow and contrary to the ordinances of the Scriptures, thinks of the motive as the whole to be achieved, and is therefore said to be vicious or wayward.

An ordained action done without love, hate or attachment, by one not desirous of fruit is spiritual, the same action done with the desire for fruit, or from self-conceit, or with much effort is said to be material. Action undertaken from delusion, without regard to one's capacity, or with loss to one's physical self, or injury to others, is said to be vicious.

The actor who is free from attachment, non-egoistic, endowed with fortitude and confidence, unaffected by success or failure, is spiritual ; he who is passionate, desirous of fruits of action, greedy, impure, harmful, moved by joy and sorrow, is material ; while he who is discordant, vulgar, stubborn, dishonest, malicious, indolent, despondent and procrastinating, is vicious.

The Executors of Action.
(*Buddhi-Dhriti-Sukha*)

After speaking of the nature of knowledge, action and the actor, the Author of the Gîtā proceeds to give the divisions of the conscious or objective mind, and of fortitude. He has isolated the conscious mind and fortitude from knowledge, action and actor, and mentions their qualities separately. The regulators of action are dependent for their activity on the sub-conscious and its impressions. These have a continuity in them, but this continuity can be interfered with by the conscious or reasoning mind, and by lack of courage. These two may prevent the regulators of action from bringing about a result. These exist for one life only and vary in successive lives, they are changeable even in the same life according to the experience an individual has as his life progresses. Buddhi and Dhriti in

childhood are not the same as they are in manhood, and these again are not the same in old age. There may be a sufficient concord between the impellors and regulators of action to produce a result, but that result may fail of achievement through lack of will (Buddhi), and even if there be will enough, a man may lack grit (Dhriti) and then the result is not attained. So without these two there can be no manifestation. Courage and will, if rightly directed are calculated to infuse a man with energy and power to attain the object of his desire.

Śri Krishna, knowing that Arjuna, though now thoroughly conversant with the knowledge of the working of the mind, in theory and practice, may yet be prevented from fighting by his conscious mind, as well as by lack of courage, brings these two things to his notice, and tells of their qualities so that he may choose the proper aspect of them and then engage in righteous battle.

The consciousness that understands action and inaction, what ought to be done, and what ought not to be done, fear and fearlessness, emancipation and bondage, is Sāttvic ; that which knows what is right and what is wrong, though not understanding the true reasons, and knows also proper and improper action, is Rājasic while the

Tāmasic consciousness regards wrong as right and looks at all things in a perverted way.

The fortitude which controls the functions of the mind, the life energies and the organs of sense by faithfully directing the objective consciousness to the divine qualities of the sub-conscious, is spiritual; that which directs the objective consciousness to attachment, desire of fruit and the gaining of wealth and desires is material; vicious fortitude does not rouse a man from lethargy to activity and is given up to fear, grief, despair and vanity.

Śri Krishna well knew the working of the average human mind and he did not wish to leave any weak spot in Arjuna's mental state which might give him a chance to say that he was still not inclined to fight. He wanted Arjuna to discharge his destined action so that he might the sooner be free from bondage. He had spoken to him of the qualities of Buddhi, so that he might bring the material aspect of it into the fore-front of his consciousness, but something more was needed to produce action than the mere bringing into play of Rājasic qualities, and that something was fortitude, the proper quality of the normal mind. The knowledge of an object starts desire for action by exciting the actor through his objective consciousness, but if

the actor has not sufficient courage, he may not take the opportunity for action, and so fail to achieve his object through lethargy, fear, grief, despair or vanity, all causes that lead to inactivity.

Arjuna had been inactive on account of grief and dejection, not of any defect in his courage. The defect was at the very source of action—his objective consciousness refused to be influenced by the creative energy of the sub-conscious. His Master, realising that although Arjuna has all the knowledge and practice of the workings of the mind, yet, if he does not summon sufficient courage, he may be unable to put his teachings into effect, brings to his mind the qualities of that vicious fortitude that prevents action.

There was yet another excuse that Arjuna had put forward—that he did not want any happiness or good fortune that came to him through killing his cousins and kinsmen. He was not willing to do such wickedness even if it brought him dominion over the three worlds, still less for any earthly kingdom. Śri Krishna realising that this objection to killing his relations and friends might shake his firmness and make him inactive, explains to him the three qualities of happiness, so that he may choose the one which will lead him to accomplish his object.

The happiness derived from the practice of merging the objective into the subjective brings to an end all pain, and the gaining of such happiness is like poison at first but like nectar in the end. It is spiritual, born of the blissful knowledge of the Embodied Self. The happiness which comes from uniting the objective consciousness with the objects of sense, is like nectar at first, but in the end like poison, and is material. Vicious happiness begins and ends in the delusion of self, and arises from sleep, indolence and misapprehension.

In the case of these three qualities, Buddhi, Dhriti and Sukha (happiness), the Sāttvic aspect of each takes one nearer to the Eternal Bliss, while the Rājasic and Tāmasic aspects bind one to worldly objects and the organs of sense. Arjuna, a Kshattriya, who has determined not to fight, might easily put forward the plea that, if Sāttvic qualities lead one to earlier liberation from rebirth, it would be worth while to gain those qualities by controlling one's mental and physical activities, and directing the energy thus gained towards the realisation of the qualities of the Embodied Self. Śri Krishna explains to his pupil the duties which the different classes of men have to perform, in the performance of which they reach their highest perfection. The

duties of Brahmanas, Kshattriyas, Vaishyas and Śūdras correspond to the qualities born of their own nature (Swabhāva) that is to the impressions they have made on the sub-conscious during their past lives.

When these impressions have had the characteristics of serenity, self-restraint, austerity, purity, forgiveness, uprightness, knowledge, wisdom and belief in the hereafter, the individual becomes a Brahmin, and is supposed to live a life of Sāttvic qualities.

If the impressions have been of the nature of boldness, prowess, fortitude, dexterity, not flying from battle, generosity and sovereignty, the individual becomes a Kshattriya. Those who are Vaishyas in the present life have had their sub-conscious impressed with the ideas of agriculture, rearing cows and trade, while Śūdras have the quality of service.

Perfection can be reached by all men in their respective classes. Those who perform the duties determined by the class in which they are born can reach the desired perfection by performing those duties (Swakarma) devoutly and perfectly.

The word 'Swakarma' can be interpreted in two ways—the behaviour of the individual towards the external objects of sense, or the behaviour of

the Embodied Self towards his physical self. According to the first interpretation, Swakarma may be good or bad or done with desire, and so will not carry a man to perfection. But if Swakarma be taken to mean the Karma of the Embodied Self, which has all the divine qualities, then by taking them as guides, and performing the duties of one's own class, one is led to perfection. So the way of perfection lies in impressing that sub-conscious self which actuates all beings and pervades the whole body, with qualities akin to its nature, while doing one's duty.

The four classes with their duties are related to the external world, and the various physical manifestations are grouped together according to the nature of their work. The relation of each of them to its own Self is described in the interpretation of the 13th verse of the Fourth Chapter. (*vide* p. 70-71.)

The ultimate end of the teachings of the Gîtâ is the realisation of the Self, and the attainment of Eternal Bliss. To this end a man must act in conformity with the divine qualities, that is he must be Sâttvic in all his acts, mental and physical. The Sâttvic qualities are possessed only by Brahmins, they can reach the Eternal Bliss earlier than the Kshattriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras

who are far below them in mental development. It seems then as if the simplest way for all these classes would be to abandon all their special vocations and take to the Brahmanic duties of worshipping the sub-conscious by directing the objective consciousness to it, and withdrawing it from the objects of sense. Śri Krishna anticipated that Arjuna might take this view and give up his duties as a Kshattriya, so he warns him that one's own duty, though destitute of merit, is better than the well-performed duty of another. He who does his duty in conformity with the divine nature of the sub-conscious (Swabhāva-Niyata) incurs no sin. The action arising out of past impressions (Sahajam Karma) however bad it may be, should not be abandoned, for the generator of all actions (Sarvārambhāh) is also enveloped in bad impressions as a fire by smoke. He does not wish Arjuna to change his vocation in order to dedicate himself to the Supreme, but to do his duty in that vocation, without allowing his consciousness to be attached to the objects of sense, and with the sub-conscious subdued, so that it does not receive any impressions that produce desires. By thus doing one's duty one ultimately reaches the stage of complete renunciation and attains the supreme perfection wherein the Embodied is completely freed from im-

pressions (Naishkarma-Siddhi). This perfection leads to realisation of the embodied Brahma.

This last step, the supreme consummation of knowledge, is now explained.

The method of merging the objective into the subjective varies according to the spiritual, material and vicious types of men. He who has purified his conscious mind so as to unite it with the sub-conscious by controlling the physical self with courage, persistently following the methods suggested in the sixth chapter, after abandoning sound and all other objects of sense, and desisting from passion and malice becomes one with the Eternal. He neither grieves nor desires. He sees the sameness of the Embodied Self everywhere and is devotedly attached to it. Such a spiritual man, when he is in this state of supreme devotion (Bhakti) to the sub-conscious gains the consciousness of its reality and nature and forthwith merges into that Supreme Consciousness of which the sub-conscious in all beings is a spark.

This devotional method of reaching the Eternal is for those Jnyāna Yogis who have controlled their mind, knowing its working, and believing in the existence of the Supreme Eternal. They continue their physical existence only to exhaust the past impressions

(Sanchit) and to liberate the Embodied Soul from successive rebirths.

There is another class of Yogis, who taking refuge in dispassion, fix their minds on one point to the exclusion of all others (Dhyāna-yoga-parā) dwelling in solitude, eating little, and controlling the speech, the body and the mind. The point of concentration may be an object of desire, which will liberate him from or bind him to the world of desire. We should concentrate on a point, by casting aside egoism, violence, arrogance, desire, anger and covetousness. A man who does this, freed from the notion of "I and mine" and tranquil in mind, becomes fit for the Eternal (Brahma-bhûyâya kalpate).

A Dhyāna Yogi, desirous of gaining the fruit of his action, impresses his sub-conscious with intense feeling (Chetasā) knowing it to be the real source of achievement of the objects of desire. Śri Krishna advises Arjuna to impress his sub-conscious with the intense desire to win the battle and then to realise the fruits of action through the objective consciousness. The sub-conscious, thus impressed, will enable him to overcome all obstacles.

When a man impresses (Dhāranā), concentrates (Dhyāna), and meditates (Samādhi) on

the sub-conscious, that is when he makes Samyamana on the Embodied Self, he gets the inspiration to do the right act even in difficulties, that is, he is guided by his inner self. If from self-conceit (Mada) a man will not listen to the advice from within, he is utterly ruined. He behaves and acts in a Tāmasic way. Śri Krishna purposely brought this idea of self-conceit to the notice of his disciple for he knew that Arjuna was determined not to fight. The knowledge imparted to him in the teachings of the Gîtā had made him regain the full and proper working of the mind, enough courage had been infused into him to go through the battle, but if in spite of all, he persisted in maintaining his determination not to act, simply through self-conceit, the object of the teaching would not be attained. Śri Krishna told him that to resolve not to fight would be useless. "Your duty coming to you as impressions from your past lives will force you to fight." This unfathomable creative force (Māyā) of the sub-conscious self is so powerful that it causes all things to revolve, like clay on a potter's wheel. He advises Arjuna to take shelter in Him, the Embodied with full trust (Sarva-Bhāvena), and by His grace he will attain the Supreme Peace, the Everlasting Abode.

EXPOSITION CHAPTER XIX

Release of Action
(*Sannyāsa*)

This knowledge about the working of the mind, more secret than any secrecy, was declared to Arjuna, and to all men, by Śri Krishna. Having reflected on it carefully one should act as it directs. Even though the secret be declared, it is of no value, for personal gain either spiritual or material, unless a man knows the way to use it. The object of the teachings of the Gîtā is not the material realisation of an object of desire; that binds one to worldly life and makes one go through the cycle of rebirths perpetually. The aim of the teachings is to put a stop to this, which can only be done by directing the working of the mental field towards the higher cosmic vibrations with their divine qualities, which are associated with the Super-conscious when it is embodied as the sub-conscious self.

The most secret knowledge of the methods by which one can impress the sub-conscious material in order to obtain the object of desire, whether spiritual or material has already been imparted in the twelfth chapter. Śri Krishna now once more reminds Arjuna of it to impress it more firmly on his mind. "Direct the mind

to the Embodied Super-conscious, be devoted to it, worship it with sacrifice (of all outside impressions) and be submissive to its influence. By this way alone can one become conscious of His existence." To obtain this knowledge of the Super-conscious which is necessary for final emancipation Śri Krishna tells his disciple to abandon all other objects of worship (Dharma) and merge his objective consciousness into the subjective which will liberate him from all sin, and will not allow himself to be overcome with grief. Arjuna's mind was fixed too much on his relatives and cousins, and this was a hint to him to withdraw his objective consciousness from those objects of sense and embodied emotions and to direct it towards his sub-conscious mind. This process of impressing the sub-conscious in order to realise the Eternal is not meant for those who have not controlled their physical activity by practising austerity, and even while practising austerity they must believe in the existence of the sub-conscious self and its divine nature. Furthermore they must believe what is told them, without any suspicion of the one who imparts the knowledge. Śri Krishna was afraid that in spite of all his teaching Arjuna might not adopt the suggestion made to him in order to establish the connection

between the objective and the subjective mind. In order to adopt a suggestion, a man must pay concentrated attention to what is said to him, and must also have implicit faith in the one who makes the suggestion. Arjuna had that faith in his Master as he stated at the end of the eleventh chapter; what Śri Krishna now wants to find out is whether he had given proper attention to the teachings; so he asks him whether he has listened with undivided attention, and whether his delusion is destroyed, and is satisfied when Arjuna answers "O Achyuta (unshakable) my delusion of mind which prevented me from discerning the truth is gone. I have regained my memory through Thy grace. I am firm, my doubts are dispelled, I will do Thy word."

This is the end of the discourse between Arjuna and his Master. The advice as to what he ought to do had been given in the early chapters, but it was ignored as he was under the sway of his objective consciousness. The "Great Within" is now awakened, and he sees the absurdity of his egoism; he now knows that the destined action must be liberated regardless of the consequences, if he is to be freed from the cycle of rebirth. He might have said, "I will now fight the battle and kill my cousins the enemy," but he only says, "I will do as you advise me to

do "(Karishye-vachanam-tava)."

There was still one point on which Arjuna needed the guidance of his Master. He did not know what would be the final result of the battle, and wanted to know what he should do. Karma Sannyāsa and Karma Yoga have both been advocated by him for the realisation of the Self, but the methods differ, according to the knowledge and wisdom of the physical self, and the working of the mind.

A Karma Sannyāsin, who is conversant with the working of the mind, renounces the world to obtain that realisation, while a Karma Yogi, who is attached to this world, carries on his usual avocations and yet tries to reach the final goal.

Karma-Sannyāsa and Karma-Yoga can both be either mental or physical. The quality of each will vary according as either or both of them are worked simultaneously or separately. The renunciation of action (Karma) in the mental method is the prevention of all outside impressions on the sub-conscious self. This prevents the generation of new Karma. The renunciation of all physical activity destroys all past Karma (Sanchit) by putting an end to its manifestation and realisation.

The simultaneous renunciation of all mental and physical activities is only possible to those

spiritual (Sāttvic) people who have merged themselves into the subjective consciousness. Arjuna has not yet reached that stage, and therefore could not be advised to adopt that method.

The renunciation of mental activity while physical activity continues, prevents accumulation of new Karma and liberates the Embodied from the past, when it is exhausted. A man thus becomes ultimately fit for emancipation. This is, as said before, the Rājasic emancipation. In the third variety of Sannyāsa Karma, the physical activity is renounced, while the mental activity goes on. This is practised only by persons of Tāmasic nature.

None of these varieties of Karma-sannyāsa was suitable for Arjuna, not even the Rājasic, for in all varieties of Sannyāsa the physical activity is only related to oneself. In Rājasic Sannyāsa, the physical activity in the form of austerity is performed only for the purification of the mind. Arjuna, a man living in the world of desire, could not become a Karma-sannyāsin, because he had his relations with the world outside, the physical activity ordained by his past impressions was for the realisation of desire, winning the battle and regaining the kingdom which rightly belonged to him and his brothers. For people

of this kind, who live for the sake of obtaining objects of desire, the practice of Karma Yoga is possible.

The simultaneous activity of mind and body in a Karma Yogi enables him to generate and liberate new and old Karma, and binds him to rebirth, when practised without discrimination by a man of Tāmasic nature. If the same Karma-Yoga is performed with discrimination without caring for the fruit of action, it becomes Sāttvic. If the mental activity is checked and physical activity is allowed to go on, the generation of new Karma comes to an end, just as it does in Rājasic Karma-Sannyāsa, but the physical activity is not used as in the latter for the sake of the self, but is liberated in the outside world, to free the sub-conscious from past impressions. In the third variety of Karma-Yoga the mental activity goes on and the physical activity is temporarily checked. An effort is thus made to destroy the fully ripened past impressions which are ready for manifestation (Prārabdha), but the accumulation of new Karma (Sanchit) goes on increasing. Such a man may appear for a time to be a Yogi, but his hypocrisy will be exposed when the sub-conscious material is saturated with Sanchit. Its creative energy will force him

to discharge his Prārabdha to unload his burden. Such a Yogi becomes Yoga-Bhrashta.

Of all these varieties, Śri Krishna advises Arjuna, as a man of the world, to follow the Rājasic Karma Yoga, which not only helps a man to obtain the objects of desire by liberating the Prārabdha, which is intuitively toned down by the divine qualities of the sub-conscious, but at the same time, because the mind is controlled, prevents the generation of new Karma. When the Prārabdha is exhausted the man becomes fit to reach the Eternal (Brahma-bhuyāya kalpate). In this way Karma-Yoga is superior to Karma-Sannyāsa for men who must carry on their avocations and duties.

This truth had been repeatedly suggested to Arjuna in order to make him active on the battlefield. His Master now impresses it on him again and advises him to be a Karma Yogi, with his mind controlled (Mam-anusara-yudhyacha) VII, 7. (Tasmāt-udyogi-bhava-Arjuna) VI"46. (Tasmāt-yogaya-ujyasva) II, 50. (Kuru-karmaiva) IV, 85.

Adopting these suggestions as coming from one who was superior to him in knowledge, capacity and reasoning power, Arjuna pulls himself together, takes up the bow which had fallen from his hands, dashes forward and fights

the battle to a successful termination.

In the foregoing pages, which represent an earnest endeavour to make the doctrine of the Gîtā easy to understand, I have departed from the traditional interpretations given by competent teachers, both saints and savants. I have reason to believe that many hitherto unexplained problems will become more easily intelligible in the light of these interpretations and many unintelligible verses and doctrines become more easy of explanation on the physical and psychical planes of being. My success in this endeavour can be gauged by the enlightened readers, I can only lay before them what I have been inspired to write. It is an endeavour to liberate the individual soul from past actions. In this way, I bring my own convictions to bear upon the so-called mystical song of Śri Krishna, the perfect and complete incarnation of God. Therefore with a devout heart I give to the world this "Exposition of the Bhagavad Gîtā" and dedicate it to Brahma with the utterance of the monosyllabic OM, who pervades the Cosmos and yet is infinitesimal, and who is the all-enveloping transcendental Beatitude. Sat-Chit-Ānanda.

BRAHMĀRPANAM.

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